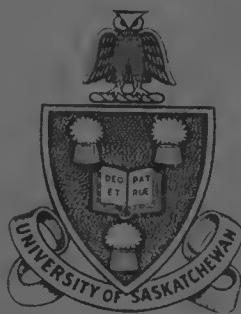


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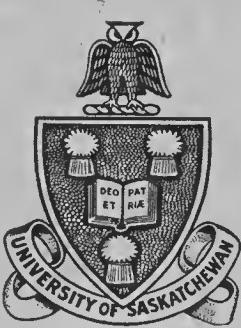
LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

MARCH
1941

UNIVERSITAS
SASKATCHEWANENSIS



THE SHEAF



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SASKATCHEWANENSIS

EDITED AND PRODUCED BY PAT BELL,
VIC LISTON, ERIC LUXTON AND ETHEL
BELLAMORE

PRINTED BY NATIONAL JOB PRINTERS,
SASKATOON



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To ALL those hardy
souls who, since the
inception of The
Sheaf, have contrib-
uted...from a shadow
to an editorial...with-
out being asked, this
book is sincerely
dedicated.

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Sad Death of a Cynic

by MAXWELL BRAITHWAITE

[FIRST AWARD]

". . . Copenhagen, Denmark . . . Reports reaching Copenhagen tell of how another five thousand Polish families have been driven from their homes into a barren region near Nisko. Victims weren't allowed to take even household goods with them and it is said that they face certain starvation . . . London, England . . . two more fishing vessels . . ."

Tom Evans sprang from his chair and irritably snapped off the radio. "Warl Warl All we hear is war! Why don't they lay off for awhile? Why don't they let us forget the blamed thing?"

Mary Evans looked up from her knitting, the slightest frown wrinkling her pretty forehead; she knew what was coming, but she knew too that there was no use arguing with this headstrong young husband of hers.

"And they'll kill thousands of men," Tom Evans went on, waving his arms excitedly, ". . . and they'll destroy millions of dollars' worth of property! And what will it get them? Nothing! What difference does it make to us here in America what Hitler does? Why don't we mind our own business? Well, I ask you, why don't we?"

Mary Evans laid down her knitting. "Now Tom, I'm not going to listen to all that again. You've just got a bad case of radio nerves. Look, why don't you go out for a walk. It's a lovely day, and you can take Pud, he hasn't had any exercise today."

As Mary Evans helped her husband into his coat, Pud danced frantically around his master's feet. Pud was a fox terrier whom the Evans had lately acquired and who had already squirmed and wiggled his way deep into their affections. And he dearly loved a walk, for it meant a glorious romp through the town with cats to be chased, sticks to be fetched, places to be explored. He barked joyously in his excitement.

"Will you drop in at Mrs. Blake's on the way home and bring me some more Red Cross wool. I'd like to finish those socks tonight," Mary Evans called after her husband as man and dog stepped out into the brisk November afternoon.

Pud immediately started off on his rounds exploring backyards and tracks in the snow, but returning regularly to jump on his master and chew at his glove, and receive the pat and kind word which he never failed to get.

It was one of those clear, bright days with just enough winter nip in the air to make vigorous walking a pleasure. The village lay, a little patch of ragged brown on the gleaming white North Dakota landscape.

But for once the far-reaching stretches of snow and sky did not bring peace of mind and soul to Tom Evans. Warl Warl Jumbled thoughts milled round and round in his mind. Thoughts that he had spent long hours straightening out with his college cronies, in his study, on long walks, over foaming glasses in their favorite tavern. Pacifism . . . passive resistance . . . trade wars . . . Merchants of Death . . . negotiations. They had figured the whole thing out, they had discovered Truth; but now something else was upsetting the pattern, something intangible, evasive, but oh, so insistent.

He shook his head irritably and shied a piece of ice at a nearby sparrow. Mustn't let this blamed war get him down. Everything going along fine and this had to turn up. A good home—great little wife—the drug store beginning to pay at last. What concern was it of his anyway? Ideals? Who had any ideals these days! Ideals had died with the last war. No, he'd never fall for that idealistic tommyrot and propaganda. Nothing worth fighting for. He tried to recall all the old arguments, the books he had read; but the insidious gnawing doubt still remained.

Pud had found a bone. It was just lying in the snow by the side of the road and he had found it and so it was his. He sniffed it eagerly, pawed it, then picked it up in his sturdy little jaws and pelted after his master. But the bone was big, almost as big as the fox terrier. It dropped from his mouth and as he tried to stop too quickly dog and bone went rolling over and over in the snow. He sniffed the bone again, licked it a couple of times, got a fresh hold on it and again scampered after the man.

He reached the man's side and setting the bone down tried to tear off some of the meat. But this gave Tom time to get ahead and that would never do. He seized the

bone and galloped on. This time he ran about a hundred feet ahead of his man before setting the bone down. This was better, it gave him time to get a couple of good bites before Tom passed.

As a rule Tom carefully inspected any meat his dog found before permitting him to eat it, but now he didn't even notice.

The next time the dog carried his prize almost a block ahead of his master. Then he settled down on his stomach and holding the bone between his fore paws prepared for a feast.

Tom Evans came out of his reverie in time to notice that his dog was far ahead and that he was eating something. He saw something else. Approaching the fox terrier from the other direction was a large, powerful dog of nondescript breed that lived at the other end of town—a vicious cur with a reputation for meanness.

The big dog swaggered up to the fox terrier, saw he was eating something and with a dictatorial growl ordered him to be off. The little dog glanced up sideways from his bone and the hair along his back bristled. This was his bone, he had found it, he had worked hard to carry it. It was his by every right; he wasn't going to give it up. The mongrel growled a deep-throated warning, his fangs bared ominously. Pud showed his white teeth and valiantly prepared to defend, with his life if necessary, what was rightfully his.

Half a block away, Tom Evans took in the situation at a glance. He shouted loudly to his dog and started to run. But at that same moment the thieving bully sprang. Tom called again and ran faster, hot anger surging through him. He saw the powerful brute lift the little dog in his jaws and shake him like a rat. As he drew near he heard the sickening crunch of bone and saw Pud go limp.

In blind fury he leaped on the big dog with no other weapon than his bare hands. Grabbing the snarling brute by the collar he threw him over. He pulled and kicked and pounded, rage giving strength to muscles. Suddenly, the brute, crazed by the lust to kill, dropped his mangled victim and turned on the man.

But now other men were running to the battle. They seized the maddened mongrel and dragged him away. Overcome by fury such as he had never before known, Tom Evans started again for the murderer.

A pitiful little whimper from the ground arrested him and he dropped to his knees beside the broken body of his little pet. The neck was broken. The dog looked up at the kneeling man with large pleading eyes that were fast dimming. And in those eyes Tom Evans read the silent plea of small and weak things. The little tail wagged feebly once more and Pud was dead.

For a long time the man knelt beside the mutilated form of his pet and stared. But he was seeing more than a little torn dog. He was seeing torn states, ravished and oppressed; he was seeing, wandering, starving people blocking highways while dive bombers machine-gunned them from above; frightened children crawling in the wreckage of their homes seeking shelter—bewildered farmers stood up against their own barns to face firing squads. He saw all the little harmless people of the earth crushed and ground down by strong and vicious bullies.

Tom Evans knew.

Epitaph

by DONALD GREENE

[FIRST AWARD]

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
ANN MARIA
WIFE OF THE REV. SAMUEL TREVES
WHO WAS BORN IN HINCKLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE, ENGLAND, MAY 6, 1852
DIED SEPTEMBER 19, 1879
AND WAS INTERRED IN THIS CHURCH
DEEPLY LAMENTED
"Accepted in the beloved"

IT IS engraved on a brass plate, on the wall to the north of the chancel. It needs polishing badly, for brass polish is scarce up here, two hundred miles north of the nearest railway; doubtless the good Indian ladies who take care of the church have never heard of such a thing. So Ann Maria's name is left to become more obscured every year, until some kind historical commission polishes it up, or, more likely, some gale from the Arctic more violent than usual whips the old church to pieces and buries the tablet under the rotten timbers.

I suppose that Ann Maria's was the first memorial to be erected to a white woman in what is now Saskatchewan. She must certainly have been one of the first of Saskatchewan's home-makers. What a place she had in which to make a home! Her nearest white neighbour would have been at Cumberland House, over two hundred miles away; there would be no running across now and then to borrow a cup of sugar. Even so, she was living in the oldest settled part of the province. There were missionaries and Hudson's Bay Company traders living at Stanley and Lac la Ronge from about 1840, and their establishments were offshoots of Cumberland House, founded by the explorer Samuel Hearne when the Thirteen Colonies still belonged to George III. Citizens of Southern Saskatchewan often think of the north as a new, pioneering land. The northerners spurn the idea. White men were sowing the seeds of civilization at Cumberland and Stanley when the south of the province was a howling wilderness.

It was when I was paying a visit to Stanley—two hours north of Prince Albert by aeroplane, with nothing between it and the North Pole—that I saw Ann Maria's epitaph. It was summer, and the little village, on the banks of the magnificent Churchill, framed with the purple of hills and the green of spruce forests, was at the peak of its northern beauty. But even then, how lonely it seemed!

Aeroplanes land on the river nowadays, and a few radios scream to the sardonic tamaracks the civilized delights of swing music; but aside from these things, the place, you feel, is in the eighteenth century. It is not a comfortable feeling. When you arrive, it oppresses you, and after a few days, it begins to wear a little on your nerves; for there the past, which you had thought buried safely in history books, still gloomily and disconcertingly lives. On every side are ghosts—of hard-fisted Gentlemen Adventurers; of silent, uncomplaining Crees; of battling York-boat men, who, laden with packs of beaver, strode down your garden path a century and a half ago; of the little missionary's wife who rests over there in the church, worn out by the wilderness. They do not make cheerful company. And if Stanley is not too cheerful now, what must it have been to Ann Maria!

She was born "at Hinckley, Leicestershire, England, May 6, 1852." The daughter of a country parson, perhaps, raised in Victorian decorum. She would have been instructed in music, drawing, and the use of the globes; have read surreptitiously perhaps the lively novels of contemporary life by Mr. Dickens and Mr. Thackeray. Her hand would have been sought, in proper Jane Austin fashion, by Mr. Treves, a young priest of the Christian Missionary Society, and, after many proper flutterings, given.

She would have made her way to her new home by a ship of the Hudson's Bay Company, sailing to York Factory for a cargo of furs. From that port, on the bleak coast of the great bay, she would have progressed by York-boat—how she would have

shuddered as her small collection of household treasures was tossed about on the portages with no more concern than if it had been a bale of rats!—up the Nelson, across Lake Winnipeg, up the muddy Saskatchewan to Cumberland; then, day by day, deeper into the wilderness, through scenes of terrifying, wild beauty, across to the Churchill and her home.

Can you see her, as the brigade makes its way around the last bend, sitting, a small figure, in the bow of the great boat, straining her eyes, eagerly and timorously, for a glimpse of what was to be her last dwelling place on earth? The sun is setting and painting the round hills on each side of the river with northern colour. It strikes a white gleam from the tall spire of the cathedral-like church, an incongruous enough sight in the jungle of spruce and tamarac. Beside the church is a log hut—the mission home. The shore is lined with inquisitive parishioners: the women in long, shapeless dresses, decked with bright, cheap shawls, the men in embroidered buckskin, all eager to see the wife of the *ayumihawékimaw*, but careful not to let their faces show it. The boat docks; she must compose her countenance into the smile of the missionary's wife.

No doubt she would try to do her duty as a good Victorian helpmate. She would try to teach the Indian women to sew, and to help the children with their catechism. But she would find Cree difficult to learn, and the women would be unresponsive, and the children would make pointed remarks about her in their strange tongue and laugh in her face. Moose meat and cranberries would be hard to prepare temptingly. It would be bitterly, unbelievably cold. And her husband would be away for days and weeks at a time, on visits to outlying Indian settlements. Around her would be nothing but the spruce and the snow and the expressionless faces of the Indians. England was so far away.

"Died September 19, 1879"—another winter was just beginning. "Interred in this church"—would the service be in English or in Cree? No one but the minister would understand the former; but the office for the burial of the dead is beautiful in sonorous, majestic Cree. ". . . Deeply lamented."

* * * * *

Autumn

THERE is a beauty bathed in autumn hues,
A rustic tenderness endowed with calm.
A warm and soft harbinger that subdues
The restless heart of man with soothing balm.

A song of Life lies in the season's breast,
To soothe deep wounds, immedicable woes;
How touching and imploring trees are dress't,
And with a faded blush the red leaf goes.

The very air is fraught with stirring breath,
A comrade to the mellow sigh of Earth—
The leaves reflectively embracing death—
A fleeting smile recalls their happy birth.

by KATHLEEN DAVIDSON

The Iron Cross

by WILLIAM HORDERN

HANS Steinbach felt that he should be happy. In fact, he told himself, he was supremely happy as his trim Messerschmitt soared across the English Channel, he was thinking of his recent honors. What true son of the Reich wouldn't be exalted? The hour of his greatest triumph was still fresh in his memory. Der Fuehrer himself had pinned the medal on his tunic. It hung there, emblematic of his victories. Yes, he had cause to rejoice. So he tried to keep a smile on his handsome face.

Suddenly Hans realized that his plane was out of formation. Skillfully he zoomed back into place. The sudden movement jarred the recently-placed medal on his breast. He felt the slight motion vividly and shivered. It was ridiculous, he told himself—plain ridiculous. Yet he wished somehow that the medal had been cast in any shape other than a cross.

The distant boom of an anti-aircraft gun disturbed his reverie. He shrugged his shoulders and looked down. In a few minutes he would be over London. Hans dreaded the thought. Yet why should he? Had he not often flown over it before? Was it not in those very battle-scarred skies that he had won his decoration? It was there that he had performed the deeds which had placed his name amongst the immortals of Germany—those were the very words of his Fuehrer. He clenched his teeth. He must be worthy of them.

A whistling anti-aircraft bullet zinged past the wing of the plane. Hans cursed and pulled his plane higher. His unusual absorption with his thoughts was making him careless. As much as he felt the honor of being decorated by his leader, he almost regretted it. The iron cross was recalling too many memories that he thought had been blotted out. They were memories of a time when he had served another master—a Master who had offered him a cross.

London beneath him. For the first time Hans realized that there was a beauty in the old city, a beauty even in its charred ruins. Hans was suddenly glad that he did not pilot a bomber. Of course, as a convoy pilot, he contributed to the destruction. But at least the contribution was indirect. Then, even from the extreme heights, he perceived the massive outline of a church—probably St. Paul's. It was strange he reflected, that he had never noticed it before. Was it because he was thinking today of a church that he had once served?

The Nazi bombers had gone into their dive. Hans should have been watching for British planes, but he wasn't. He was staring at the form of the church, which, to him, seemed to stand out from its surroundings. But why should he feel this way, he asked himself. Hadn't he given up the church long ago? Yes, he had decided that he could give more service to "Greater Germany" as a pilot than as a minister of the Gospel. He was no longer bothered that Nazism was so opposed to Christianity. Christianity was too idealistic. Why should he be a martyr, like so many others, for pure idealism?

As he watched a bomb fell upon the church. It wasn't the first church hit by German bombs, but it was the first one that Hans had noticed. His eyes were suddenly drawn to the medal upon his breast. There seemed to appear, for the briefest second, a figure hanging to the cross. He rubbed his arm across his eyes and cursed weakly. He looked again; the figure was gone.

The British fighters were coming. He must get his mind away from these silly illusions. He looked earthward. The church, although shaken, stood defiantly erect. Suddenly he felt a new sensation creeping over him. Usually when in the air he felt alone. Sometimes he was too much alone. But now he sensed that there was Someone with him. His first response was fear; then a soothing hand seemed to touch his shoulder, and out of the past came words that he had once known well. However, they had a new meaning for him today. "Repent ye—I came to seek and to save that which was lost."

The British planes were upon him. He was glad. He had been getting morbid—letting a little iron cross play on his nerves like that. He needed action to steady himself. He would ask for leave as soon as he got home. Whipping his plane around, he charged at a British ship. The ship came within his sights, his fingers slid around the triggers and then froze. Once more he heard the words—"Repent ye—." Dimly Hans realized

that he had spoken them himself. But the voice seemed far away, like that of another person. He looked down at the iron cross on his breast. It was no longer a dull color. The sun, shining on it, had turned it to flaming gold. It was no longer the cross of Hitler, but the cross of his first Master. The triggers were forgotten as his fingers sought the cross. Dimly it came to his mind that the plane was rocking with the impact of bullets.

* * * *

The British ground crew were busy dragging the body from the wreckage of the Messerschmitt.

"Is he dead?"

"Yeah—not a sign of life."

"Poor fellow! See how fanatically they worship their country. This one is clutching at his iron cross as if it mattered more than life."

* * * *

My Generation's Heritage

“STEADY son, I know just how you feel,
There was a day which held me like that too,
My early twenties shouldered one ideal,
'Reform the world'—just as you want to do.

“YES, to turn it upside down and shake it;
Pattern and remold in fashion new;
Place bliss Nirvana here on earth, knit
The wounds of strife, and selfishness subdue.

“I SOUGHT to melt the golden calf away,
To substitute the new for outworn models,
But 'tis true what praying parson used to say,
'You can't put new wine in old bottles'.

“MANY years have passed since then, my son,
Things have changed—I have not changed, and yet
Though battles have been won, new ones have begun,
Youthful hopes remain undone which I regret.

“SUFFERING and war may paint a shadowed scene
Of life, but with the shade I see a light,
A fruit of every generation's dream,
The evolution of the Hand of Right."

by JOHN REYNOLDS

What Foods These Morsels Be!

by SHIRLEY PLANK

AS a rule I am a mild, inoffensive, law-abiding citizen. I pride myself upon being rather more good-natured than otherwise. I don't fly into a rage when I am routed out of bed at three in the morning to answer a telephone call intended for the junk yard. I never glare at the man who innocently treads upon my pet corn in a crowded street car. I even control myself admirably—though I admit it is a great strain—when my adversary at contract requests that I "play one and look at the rest" or refrain from "shuffling the spots off 'em." But there is one thing that brings out all the worst that is in me, rouses all my undesirable primitive instincts, and turns me into a raging maniac from whom the most ferocious prehistoric monster would have fled in terror. It is an apparently harmless little book—my wife's cook book.

I should like to meet the author of that cook book in a dark alley some night when there is no one within hearing distance. If I ever do, I hope, for his sake, that he is wearing a full suit of armour, with the visor down.

It all came about this way. My wife, when we had been married about a year, decided to visit her mother in the country for a few days. I was unable to leave the office at the time, so it was decided that I would stay in our apartment during her absence, but take my meals out. To this I readily assented, saying nothing to her of a little plan already beginning to take form in my more or less agile brain.

It was not until the fourth day of my wife's absence that the plan materialized. It was Saturday, and, since I have Saturday afternoon free, I decided to give a stag party. Nothing elaborate, you know—just a few friends in for dinner and bridge afterwards. The only catch in the plan was that I determined to cook the dinner myself. Yes, little Freddie, with his own little hands, would prepare and serve the delicious viands of which his friends would partake with admiration and awe! Already I could hear their extravagant praises as they sampled the results of my labour, and I heard myself saying modestly,

"Nothing to it, really, boys. All you have to do is follow the recipe."

As it turned out, I was spared the necessity of making this little speech, or any kind of speech at all, for the guests were almost as conspicuously absent as the extravagant praises and the delicious viands. But I'm getting ahead of my story.

In a state of pleased expectancy I settled down to plan my menu. Of course I could serve the traditional beefsteak and French fried potatoes, but somehow that seemed hardly elaborate enough for the occasion. No, I wanted something different and I might say here and now that the results were different enough to suit anyone.

I finally decided upon the following menu:

SURPRISE EGGS	ROAST BEEF FRENCH FRIED POTATOES	SPINACH
	YORKSHIRE PUDDING COFFEE	

It seemed a simple enough menu, except for the surprise eggs and the Yorkshire pudding. I had never tasted the latter, but I had heard it recommended many times, and since there was a recipe for it in my wife's cook book I decided to settle my dessert problem that way. It was while looking up my pudding recipe that I came across these surprise eggs that caused me so much trouble later. They were well named. They were, without doubt, the most surprising eggs I ever saw, and my friend—but that comes later.

Armed with an impressive-looking list I sallied forth to do the marketing. It was two o'clock when I returned, and I put the roast beef in at once so it would be sure to be done. Anyone can roast beef. All you do is season it, put it in a pan with a little water, put it in the oven, and remove it at dinner time, done to a turn and emitting an aroma that would entice the gods of Olympus from their lofty pinnacles. I did it correctly, too, except for one thing: I should have turned the oven on. When I discovered my mistake it was five-thirty, and my guests were beginning to arrive—and depart. But to return to my story—

The spinach was the next to be fixed. I'm not particularly fond of spinach, but I've been told it's very good for one, and since there was some in the ice-box I decided to utilize it. The only recipe I could find for preparing it was for fried eggs and spinach, but it seemed fairly simple to prepare the spinach and omit the fried eggs. The recipe was something like this, as far as the spinach was concerned:

"Well wash the spinach several times, remove the mid-rib from the leaves, and put in a large sauce pan. Sprinkle lightly with salt and simmer until tender. Serve very hot with butter and vinegar."

Well, I washed the spinach and removed the mid-rib alright. But instead of putting the leaves in the sauce pan and throwing away the mid-rib I threw away the leaves and put the mid-rib in the sauce pan. How was I to know? I put the sauce pan on the stove, vaguely wondering what "simmer" meant. I know now. It is a cook's term for scorch-and-smell-like-the-devil. At least that's what that spinach did, and I had followed directions exactly.

While the spinach was simmering, I peeled the potatoes and cut them up in strips, as I had seen my wife do many times, and then I boiled the eggs for the surprise eggs. Next time you are bored and want something to do, just try these. I can guarantee that whatever else you may be before you have finished, you will not be bored.

4 hard boiled eggs	2 tomatoes
$\frac{1}{2}$ head of lettuce	Pepper and salt
	$1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces butter

Cut eggs in half width-ways and remove the yolks. Put yolks in a basin and blend with butter and salt and pepper. Work mixture together until creamy, put into a forcing bag and force the filling into whites of eggs. Place each half egg on slice of tomato and garnish with lettuce leaves.

Well, first I stuck on which way an egg is width-ways. I didn't waste much time on that, though, because I decided they would taste the same no matter which way I cut them. Then I got along fine until I came to where you put the stuff in a forcing bag. I didn't know what a forcing bag was, and I don't know yet and what's more I don't care. But I had seen several empty salt bags in a drawer, and I thought they would do just as well. It was getting on toward five by that time, so I put the lard on to melt for the potatoes, and then I went back to the eggs. The spinach smelled terrible by that time, and it seemed to be getting harder every minute instead of tenderer, but I still had hope.

I put the egg yolks in a bag and tried to force them from it into the egg whites. I thought the operation would be quite simple: part of it was. The yolks squeezed out of the bag alright; I had no difficulty at all with that part of it. They positively leaped out, but the trouble was that they showed a marked preference for leaping into the air or on the floor or on my best trousers—anywhere, everywhere, except into the egg whites.

It was at this point that my first guests arrived. I stripped off my apron—which was now liberally polka-dotted with yellow—and hastened to welcome them. There were two of them, smiling their greetings, but their smiles died as soon as I appeared.

"I——excuse me," gulped one of them. "I just came over to tell you that my wife is sick and I can't stay. Sorry!"

The last few words were cast at me over their departing shoulders.

I stared after them in amazement for a few minutes, and then returned to my eggs. It was not until six of my seven guests had arrived ready for a festive evening and departed in haste with muttered excuses after the first glance at my welcoming countenance, that I looked in the mirror. I was tempted to depart in haste myself. My whole face was literally spotted with yellow. Aside from the fearful aspect the color gave my face—yellow never did suit me. I had a yellow tie once, and the first time wore it my wife called the doctor and he sent me to a sanatorium for six months. The superintendent took one look at me, (I still wore the yellow tie), and pronounced me dead, and it was only by the unwavering toil of my friends that I was rescued from an entirely unearned grave. I say, aside from this, my friends were probably thoroughly convinced that I was suffering from a virulent attack of spotted fever.

I washed my face and gave up the eggs as a bad job. It was then I discovered that I had forgotten to turn the heat on the oven. I was rather discouraged by that

time, and the spinach was getting on my nerves. The lard was melted for the potatoes, so I put them in and went to welcome my one remaining guest, who was hammering the door down.

Well, the less said about the dinner, the better. We didn't attempt to eat the meat, which had not started to cook, and the smell of the spinach does not bear mentioning. We nibbled half-heartedly at the egg-whites. The potatoes didn't seem to want to brown, but we tried them anyway. My friend asked if they were clothes pins. He said they looked like they might be. He said he had never tasted anything like these things before either. It was not until we were on our way to a restaurant for dinner that I thought of the Yorkshire pudding I had intended to make.

My wife has never found out about that party. I asked my friend not to mention it to her, and he said he would gladly forget it himself if he could. The mere thought of it gave him indigestion for hours, and he seemed convinced that the odour of the spinach would haunt him to his grave. I hired a woman to clean up the kitchen. It took her two days, and even then she didn't do a thorough job, for my wife is still puzzling about the yellow spots she found on her kitchen ceiling.

* * * * *

The Quest

*I SOUGHT for God in cities fair and free
 I walked the crowded streets with lively tread
 Gazing at faces in the passing throng,
 I looked on smartly turned out business men
 Doctors and lawyers, well fed and growing stout,
 Fashionable painted women, rich in jewels
 Wealthy and careless, passing in and out
 Of the great stores and laughing, gossiping.
 I went into their gaudy city homes
 I saw their tables heavy with rich foods
 I saw them drink liqueurs and sparkling wines
 I saw their faces, hard and feelingless,
 I did not find God there.*

*I wandered on through courts and palaces
 Through Parliaments of empire, Governments and state
 I heard the counsels of the great and wise,
 I mingled with the noble and the strong
 And still I found Him not.*

*I searched for Him thro' all the Grand Hotels
 I watched at ballroom doors and concert halls,
 I looked on lovely laughing girls and men
 Young, strong and beautiful, the salt of earth
 And yet I saw Him not.*

*Where to search next? the church? He must be there—
 I pushed the heavy door and entered in,
 Thick clouds of incense wreathed me round about,
 Seductive music filled the heavy air,*

*I looked on gaudy vestments, splendid ritual,
I heard the prayers and listened to the hymns.
The priest's words fell upon my weary ears
And choked and sick I struggled to the door
And sought the open air of heaven.
Blessed escape from empty, careless splendour
The worship of a God they have not seen
And do not care to know, lest finding Him
They see the emptiness of their own souls.
God dwells not in the church.*

*I stood outside and gazed upon the world,
The church behind had never looked on God
The palaces before had never known His name,
The noble and the wealthy on all sides
They could not see Him if they tried
Their eyes were dazzled so, with greedy gazing
On their gold, their hearts were closed and dead
From such long adoration of themselves.
As night drew on I climbed the darkened hill
That overlooks the sea, and weary from my search
Stretched my tired limbs upon the grass and slept.
I woke before the azure streaks of dawn
Had straggled pale across the eastern sky,
I saw the last stars fade, and watched the sun
Rise silent from the sea. I heard the lark
Soar with a song from out the dew wet grass,
I listened to the whisp'ring waves upon the sand,
And there I found my God.*

—K.A.F.

* * * * *

Flight of Youth

*WHEN our minds had slipped from sorrow
And we pushed the world away—
There was still that old tomorrow,
P'raps we'd try another day.*

*And the morrows came and withered,
Like a song unborn, or dying—
And our dreams, tho' fading, lingered,
We were young—but Time was flying!*

by SHIRLEY PLANK

The Organizer

by DONALD GREENE

[FIRST AWARD]

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

Characters: IRA JOHNSON
MARY JOHNSON, *his wife*
JERRY JOHNSON
DAN JOHNSON
JAKE TOLBY

The scene is the kitchen of Ira Johnson's farm in southern Saskatchewan. It is clean but barely furnished. There is a piece of worn linoleum in the middle of the board floor. A kitchen range is at the right; on it are the dishes Mrs. Johnson needs for preparing breakfast. Behind it is a box for fire-wood. In the right wall, upstage from the range, is a door leading to the front of the house. In the upper right corner, against the back wall, is a wash stand; above it are a number of hooks, on which a few coats and caps are hung. In the center right of the back wall a flight of steep stairs comes down to the stage. About five stairs up is a landing, from which the stairs continue out of sight to the right. A curtained window is in the left center of the back wall. Underneath it is a large oil-cloth covered table partly set for breakfast. Kitchen chairs are placed at the right and left of the table. Another door in the center of the left wall leads outside. A chair is placed to the left of the stove and a little upstage from it. There are a few calendars on the wall, but the whole room gives an impression of bareness.

It is half-past seven on a November day. A coal-oil lamp on the table gives a dim light. As the play progresses, the sun rises and the lighting gets brighter, until at the end the light of the lamp is entirely obscured.

After the curtain rises, Mrs. Johnson enters from the right, carrying dishes which she places on the table. She is a slight, work-worn woman, in her forties, but with grey hair. She looks tired. From the table she goes to the stove, where she continues for a moment with her preparations for breakfast. Then she sits on the chair near the stove, evidently needing to rest. She places her head in her hands. Presently Jerry, her son, enters left. He is a slight, fair-haired young man, in his early twenties. He resembles his mother. Both of them have soft, rather hesitant voices. Jerry and Dan wear the farmer's working clothes. Mrs. Johnson has on a worn house dress and an apron. Jerry carries an armful of wood which he places in the wood-box behind the stove. At the noise, Mrs. Johnson sits up with a start. Jerry straightens and speaks to her.

JERRY: (*kindly*) Morning, mum.

MRS. JOHNSON: Oh, is that you, Jerry? (*Gets up and goes to stove, where she examines the food which is cooking. Apologetically*) I don't know what gets into me these days. Sometimes I sit down for a rest and get thinking, and I forget all about what's going on around me.

JERRY: (*taking off his mittens and warming his hands over the stove.*) Thinking about what, mum?

MRS. JOHNSON: Oh, silly things. About when I was a girl back in the East. You know, I dreamed last night your grandma was getting me ready for school—buttoning me up in an old blue coat I used to wear and putting an apple in my pocket. If I didn't get my spelling in the morning, I uscd to polish the apple nicely and give it to the teacher. Your grandma used to scold me for not eating it myself, but I was always a silly, timid sort of thing, and I didn't want the teacher to be cross with me. Mummy's scoldings didn't matter so much. They gave you a sort of comfortable feeling—as if she was glad she had me around to scold . . . Do you want your breakfast now, Jerry?

JERRY: I'd better go out and look at Molly again. (*Starts to draw his mittens on.*)

MRS. JOHNSON: How is she?

JERRY: Pretty bad, I'm afraid. I don't think she'll last the day.

MRS. JOHNSON: The calf?

JERRY: It's dead. Maybe we can pull Molly through. We're working our heads off. Dan's got a new idea he found in the veterinary book. Can we have some hot water?

MRS. JOHNSON: I'll fill the coffee pot first. (*Does so.*) You take the kettle. (*Gives it to Jerry.*) Hadn't you and Dan better have some coffee? You've been up all night.

JERRY: After a little while, mum.

MRS. JOHNSON: Oh, Jerry, I wish there was something I could do to help! She's our best cow.

JERRY: I know, mum. Dan and I are trying our best. (*Turns to go.*)

MRS. JOHNSON: But you're so young. If your father was home—

JERRY: (*a little grimly*) I heard him come this morning about two. He's got Jake Tolby with him.

MRS. JOHNSON: (*relieved*) Oh! Didn't you tell him . . . ?

JERRY: (*abruptly*) No. (*Exit left. Mrs. Johnson stares after him, a little frightened.*
Then she sighs, and lays two places at the right and left of the table. As she is doing this, Jake Tolby comes down the stairs. He is a wizened little man of fifty, with a knowing smirk which continually plays about his face. He wears a well-worn business suit.)

TOLBY: (*pleasantly*) Morning, Mrs. Johnson.

MRS. JOHNSON: Why, good morning, Mr. Tolby. Jerry was just telling me you came home with Ira last night.

TOLBY: Uh huh. We were pretty late, I guess, but the meeting lasted longer than we expected. (*Enthusiastically*) Say, Mrs. Johnson, that husband of yours has got the real stuff. He had that bunch eating right out of his hand last night.

MRS. JOHNSON: (*with a feeble smile*) Oh, was it a success? I'm so glad to hear it. There's a clean towel over the wash-stand, Mr. Tolby, if you want to wash. (*Takes a dipper of water from the reservoir on the stove, and puts it in the wash-basin. Then she continues to set the table, placing food at the left for Tolby.*)

TOLBY: Thank you, ma'am, thank you. (*Rolls up sleeves and washes, interspersing the following with his ablutions.*) Yes, Mrs. Johnson, it was sure a success. You know, we kind of expected a little difficulty over there at Pine Ridge. They've got a few farmers over there with a little cash in the bank that think they're better than the rest of us poor devils. The candidate, he started in on his speech first, and you could see he was pretty nervous. The audience could see it too. "G'wan back to Regina, you damn fourflushing lawyer," they started calling . . . Between you and me, Mrs. Johnson, I don't think we picked the right man for this constituency when we picked Darrell.

MRS. JOHNSON: Oh? That's too bad. I always liked Mr. Darrell. He's so well educated, and he seems awfully sincere.

TOLBY: Being sincere ain't going to get us into power. You've got to have get-up, confidence. You've got to be able to handle people. You've got to be able to kid them along. You've got to be an organizer. Darrell—oh, sure, he's sincere and all that. Yeh, he's got a swell education—but what do poor down-trodden dirt farmers out here on the prairie want with an education? What we need in this party right now is an organizer. (*He finishes washing and hangs up the towel.*) And I know where we can get one, too.

(*Johnson has been coming down the stairs during the last part of this speech. He is a tall, stoutish, but well-built man in his late forties. He wears a business suit. He has a rich, resonant voice, and exudes confidence in himself. As he hears Tolby, he pauses on the bottom step, and looks at him interestedly.*)

JOHNSON: Well, Jake, where can they get one?

TOLBY: (*Seeing him*) They can get him right here, you old son of a gun! Ira Johnson—president of the Wolf Valley Local, and the best damn organizer the party's ever seen! (*He goes over to Johnson, slaps him on the back, and puts his arm around him affectionately.*)

JOHNSON: (*coming down, with a self-satisfied, yet gracious smile*) Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you. Morning, Mary. Got any breakfast for a poor hard-working man?

MRS. JOHNSON: It's ready, Ira. Sit down here, Mr. Tolby. (*Tolby sits at the left of table, Johnson at right*). I didn't hear you and Mr. Tolby come home last night. Ira.

JOHNSON: (*winking at Tolby*) Oh, Jake and I came in with our shoes in our hands, you bet. Mary's a dead shot with a rolling pin at a hundred yards, isn't she, Jake? (*Mrs. Johnson smiles feebly.*) Hasn't any sympathy when they keep a man up till all hours in the service of his country. (*A little more sharply.*) Mary, did you get my other white shirt ironed?

MRS. JOHNSON: Oh, yes, Ira, but you're not—you're not going out campaigning again today?

JOHNSON: Got to keep right on the job. I told Darrell I needed a little rest at home, but he wouldn't hear of it. Said I had to come along with him over to Chester and do some campaigning there. (*He and Tolby go on with their breakfast.*)

TOLBY: He said he'd never been so impressed before by a local man's ability. Ain't you proud of your husband, Mrs. Johnson? But we know what would happen to Mr. Darrell over at Chester if he didn't have a good organizer along, don't we, Ira?

JOHNSON: (*with becoming modesty*) Well, I don't think it's very loyal to run our candidate down, Jake, but after all, he does need some one with organizing ability to take care of that bunch of Chester plutocrats. And I guess if the candidate needs me, I have to be the goat.

TOLBY: (*giggling a little*) We know how much he really wanted you along, Ira. He looked pretty green when you stole his thunder last night. But if it's a choice between being chased out of the hall and letting Mr. Ira Johnson have the honours of the evening, it's my bet that Mr. Darrell, K.C., is going to find he has a sore throat tonight and can't speak.

JOHNSON: (*interested*) D'you think he'll let me make the main speech of the evening?

TOLBY: Didn't you hear him hinting about how he thought he had a cold coming on? He's got a few grains of sense sometimes, Mr. Candidate Darrell has.

JOHNSON: (*pleased*) Now, Jake, you shouldn't talk that way. (*Takes a drink of coffee.*)

MRS. JOHNSON: But, Ira,—I wish you could stay around for a little while. The boys are having a hard time with Molly.

JOHNSON: (*setting the cup down with a bang*) The boys? Molly? For God's sake, what's the matter with those damn fool boys? When I was their age, I could run a farm for a few days without getting into hot water. Has Molly lost her calf?

MRS. JOHNSON: (*twisting her hands underneath her apron*) I'm afraid so, Ira, and—
and—

JOHNSON: (*dangerously*) Well?

MRS. JOHNSON: (*her timidity getting the better of her*) Oh, nothing. They'll tell you when they come in. Mr. Garvin, from the mortgage company, phoned up yesterday and said he wanted to see you right away.

JOHNSON: (*pushing away his plate and getting up. He speaks softly at first.*) Oh, Mr. Garvin from the mortgage company wants to see me, does he? Well, Mrs. Johnson, you can just tell Mr. Garvin and his mortgage company where they can go. Mortgage companies! (*He laughs.*) I know all about mortgage companies. Fine people! So obliging! When times are good and a farmer wants a little cash, oh, they're so nice and courteous. Oh, yes, Mr. Johnson, we'd be delighted to lend you a little money on security. They love to lend money then—at plenty of interest, of course. (*His temper gets the better of him for a moment.*) Parasites! (*He returns to his ironic tone.*) When the farmer's prosperous, they're his best friends, as long as they think they can wring a little of his hard earned money out of him. 'D'you know, Jake, that I had ten thousand dollars in the bank in 1918? Fine friend Mr. Garvin was then. But the minute the farmer's down and out, that's when they show their true colors. Friends of the farmers! The farther he's down, the harder they kick him. Oh, I don't blame the mortgage companies. The people down east that run them don't care about the farmers—why should they? They've got to earn a living, too. They've got to have their fine motor cars and fur coats and cocktail parties. What does it matter to them if we starve? No, I don't blame them. (*With rising indignation*) But I do blame the system that's responsible for them—that's what I blame. And that's the system that we'll have to get rid of, my friends, before this fair Dominion of ours is ever to blossom out fair, free, and prosperous, from sea to sea. (*He sits down suddenly.*)

TOLBY: (clapping his hands vigorously) Hear, hear! That's the stuff to give them! You'll roll them in the aisles tonight, Ira. We'll have you down in Ottawa yet.

JOHNSON: (*a little humbly, but interested*) D'you really think I could, Jake? (*He looks pensive. Suddenly, Mrs. Johnson sobs, buries her face in her apron, and runs out of the room, right.*)

TOLBY: (*looking after her*) Well, what d'you know about that? The idea of you being Member of Parliament made her break right down.

JOHNSON: (*a little uncomfortably*) No—no, I don't think it was that, Jake. She's a funny woman, Mary. Most women would be pleased to see their husband president of the party local—organizer for the whole east half of the constituency, you might say. Most women would take some interest in the problems this country is up against. But not Mary.

TOLBY: How about your boys?

JOHNSON: (*contemptuously*) Them? They don't care what happens to the country. Dan, now, he's got some brains. He reads the newspapers, and he can talk some, too—used to be pretty good in debates at school. But he's been sore ever since I made him leave high school and help run the farm. Had some fool idea about being a scientist. Some teacher told him he was good at fooling around with test tubes. Teachers! (*He snorts*)! I told him right at the outset: "Look here, young man. I can't afford to send you on to school, and I'll never be able to as long as this country's run the way it is. If you were a bank manager's son now, sure, you could go to college. But you're not," I said "you're a dirt farmer's son, and the best thing you can do is come home and help run the farm while your father's helping to change the system. If we do that, then we'll kick the bloody bankers' sons out, and you can go to college if you want to."

TOLBY: Great stuff, Ira!

JOHNSON: Now he's got fool ideas about scientific farming—gets pamphlets from the university and all that, and tries to tell me how to run the farm. I said, "You're a plain fool, Dan. I've been farming here for twenty-five years and I'm broke. Maybe you think you can learn more out of books in six months about farming than I have in twenty-five years; but as long as the big interests are squeezing the blood out of you, you haven't got a chance. If you read some of the party literature," I said, "and got out and helped us a bit, you'd be doing something."

TOLBY: You sure told him off, Ira. What's Jerry like?

JOHNSON: Oh, Jerry takes after his mother. He's a good kid, I guess, but he's kind of soft. He'll just be a plodder all his life.

TOLBY: (*a little maliciously*) I hear he's going to be married.

JOHNSON: (*exploding*) What!

TOLBY: He's been mooning around my young niece for over two years, and—well, I shouldn't tell you this. It's supposed to be in confidence—

JOHNSON: Go on.

TOLBY: My sister says that Alice told him that she wasn't going to wait for him any longer. Either they get married, she says, or they break off.

JOHNSON: The young puppy! He wants to marry her and bring her here to live, I'll be bound. Fine state of affairs that'd be. I'll give the young fellow a talking to.

TOLBY: (*looking out the window*) Here comes Jerry now. (*Alarmed*). Now, Ira, don't be too hard on him—and, for Pete's sake don't let on I told you anything about it.

JOHNSON: Don't worry. I'll handle him. (*Enter Jerry, left. He has the tea kettle in his hand. He ignores Tolby and Johnson and goes over and places it on the stove.*)

JOHNSON: (*smoothly*) Morning, Jerry.

JERRY: Morning. (*He does not turn around.*)

JOHNSON: Jake Tolby's here, Jerry. Didn't you notice him?

JERRY: (*a little gruffly, turning around*) Oh. Morning, Mr. Tolby.

TOLBY: Morning Jerry. Great morning for this time of year, ain't it, Jerry?

JERRY: Yeh. Swell.

JOHNSON: Your mother tells me Molly lost her calf.

JERRY: Yeh.

JOHNSON: Too bad—but I suppose you boys did what you could. It goes to show what a farmer's life is these days, Jerry. There used to be a time when a young

fellow could hope to make a pretty good living on the farm, even get married and set up a family. But the way things are now, with the capitalists keeping the price of wheat down—

JERRY: (*roughly*) If you mean Tolby told you Alice and I want to get married, you needn't worry. (*Strides off left.*) I told her she'd better find another fellow. I know I can't get married—you don't need to rub it in. Other farmer's sons around here can afford to get married—but not yours. (*Exit left.*)

JOHNSON: Well, sir, I never thought Jerry had that much life in him!

TOLBY: (*nervously*) If my sister hears that I told about what Alice said—

JOHNSON: But if that young brat thinks he's going to talk to me like that and get away with it, he's going to be mistaken. (*Calls off right.*) Mary! Come in here. (*Enter Mrs. Johnson right.*)

MRS. JOHNSON: He was twenty-three last month. Ira, don't be hard on the boy. He didn't mean to answer you back. He felt pretty bad about Alice and he's been up all night with Molly—

JOHNSON: Up all night? I thought I saw a light out at the barn when we came home, but I didn't think any more of it. Is Molly in trouble? It's bad enough losing her calf; she's the only thing on this blasted farm that brings in any money.

MRS. JOHNSON: (*twisting her apron*) Yes, Ira, I guess she's pretty bad. The boys have been trying their best, but—

(Enter Dan Johnson, left, with Jerry a little behind. *Dan is tall and dark, resembling his father more than his mother. He advances boldly across the stage, takes off his cap and mittens deliberately, and throws them on the floor behind the stove. He puts his hands in his pockets, and stands facing his father, with a little swagger.*)

DAN: Well, Molly's dead.

JOHNSON: What do you mean, you impudent pup? Why didn't you call the veterinarian?

DAN: We did. He said you owed him over a hundred dollars for the last ten years, and he wasn't going to put himself out for a dead-beat like you.

JOHNSON: What? (*He is unable to speak for a moment with anger.*) Why didn't you call me when I came home this morning?

JERRY: Because you were drunk, that's why.

DAN: You and Tolby sounded pretty nice singing "O Canada" as you drove in. Very patriotic. I'm sure Molly appreciated it.

MRS. JOHNSON: (*terrified*) Boys! You mustn't talk that way to your father!

DAN: No, what's the use? He's so wrapped up in his tin-horn politics he wouldn't know what we were talking about anyway. Jerry and I are through—quit—washed up, see? We're not taking any more of it. (*Johnson tries to collar him. Dan pushes him back down into his chair.*) Keep your hands off me, you old bag of wind. I'm twenty years old and you treat me as if I was ten. You've had me out working as a full-time labourer for the last five years for a starvation diet and a few rags of clothing. And you shoot off your mouth about the exploitation of labour! Well, I got one thing out of it anyway—a set of muscles, while you've been sitting around pool halls telling people how to run the country. Keep your soft hands away from me, you politician, if you don't want to get hurt. (*Mrs. Johnson sits and buries her face in her hands. Johnson sits at the table, where he stares in fascination at Dan. Tolby has backed into his corner out of harm's way, and is evidently enjoying it. Jerry stands at the left of the stage, rather nervously twiddling with his cap.*)

DAN: We've got a little money we managed to keep out of your hands, Jerry and I. There's a freight going through town this morning and we'll catch it. It won't take us long to pack. Come on, Jerry. (*Starts upstairs. Jerry follows him.*)

JOHNSON: (*starting up*) Wait, boys, wait! Who's going to run the farm?

DAN: How about running it yourself? You're pretty fond of telling other people how to run things. (*Disappears upstairs. Jerry gets as far as the bottom step.*)

JOHNSON: Jerry! Jerry, wait! Come back here.

JERRY: (*gruffly*) Well?

JOHNSON: Be reasonable, boy. Come down here and talk it over.

JERRY: (*coming back slowly*) There's nothing to talk over. Dan and I tried to talk things over with you a long time ago—lots of times. But you wouldn't ever listen. You just snapped our heads off. You've never done anything for us ever since they started the party local here six years ago. All you cared about was running around the country organizing. Dan and I did our best with the farm, but we were only kids, and we made a mess of it. You never gave us any help—you just made fun of us. We don't want to live on the edge of starvation all our lives.

JOHNSON: But it's not my fault we're poor. If we don't get any prices for our products, if the big interests down east rob us—

JERRY: I'm not a political meeting, dad. I've heard all that before. I don't know—maybe there's something in what you say. But I do know that there are other farmers in the district whose barns aren't falling to pieces, and whose wives get a new dress once in a while and whose sons can get married. They're poor, sure; they work hard for only a little bit, but they manage to have a little fun in life, and they keep their self-respect. I don't know anything about politics, dad; maybe there's something in your ideas; maybe the country isn't run right—we know we can't make much money with wheat the price it is; but I don't see how you're helping matters by letting your farm go to pieces and telling your neighbours to shoulder their pitchforks and march to Ottawa. (*Johnson has been growing more and more thoughtful throughout this.*)

JOHNSON: (*in a soft, uncertain voice*) Well, maybe you're right, Jerry. Maybe I have been wrong in some ways. But have another try at it.

JERRY: No, Dad. Dan and I want to make a new start. We'll never get anywhere the shape things are in. It'd take the rest of our lives to pay off the mortgage over our heads.

JOHNSON: (*contemptuously*) Pay off the—(*Recalling himself*) Jerry, listen here. If you want to marry Alice, I won't object. You can bring her here; we'll manage somehow.

JERRY: (*a little reluctantly*) No—it's too late now. It wouldn't be fair to her. That's all over. Besides, Dan's made up his mind to go. I can't leave him—he isn't much more than a kid. I can't let him start out in the world all alone. He's never been away from home in his life.

(*There is a pause. Johnson is evidently at a loss; then his eyes rest on Mrs. Johnson, and he brightens.*)

JOHNSON: You're worried about Dan, are you, Jerry? You think you have to look after him? Aren't you forgetting somebody else that has more of a claim on you? Look at your mother there, crying her eyes out. How's she going to stand it when both of her children are gone, heaven knows where?

JERRY: (*in distress*)—But—but, I don't want—

JOHNSON: (*his voice rising*) You know what kind of a woman your mother is, Jerry—she's an angel come down to earth. Do you remember how she used to sit up nights watching you when you had pneumonia three years ago? She saved your life, then. She isn't well. How's she going to stand the extra work, if we're left to run the farm alone? How's she going to stand the heartbreak when both of you leave?

JERRY: (*running over to her and putting his arms round her*) Oh, mother!

MRS. JOHNSON: (*trying to control her tears*) Jerry, don't listen to him! Don't listen to him! Go away from here while you have the chance—if you don't, you'll never go. (*She covers her face again with her hands, unable to go on. Jerry stands in hesitation.*)

JOHNSON: You see how unselfish she is? Not a thought for herself. And you'd go off and leave her, not caring what became of her! (*Dan came down the stairs. He wears a mackinaw coat, ready to leave, and has a pack on his back.*)

DAN: Pretty nice work, father. Fine organization. Well, Jerry, are you going to let him take you in?

JERRY: (*weakly*) Dan, I can't leave mother. You know what she'd be like.

DAN: Don't be a fool. Ask her what she wants to do. Didn't she tell you she wants you to go?

JERRY: She's just saying it for my sake.

JOHNSON: (softly) Yes, Jerry, ask her again. Make sure. Make her tell you to go away and never see her again—never.

JERRY: I—

JOHNSON: Make her say it. You want to be sure. Make her say it.

JERRY: Mother—mother, do you really want me to go away?

MRS. JOHNSON: (making a desperate effort to get the words out) Yes, Jerry, I want you—I want you—

JOHNSON: (Softly and insistently) Say it. Say it.

MRS. JOHNSON: (breaking down) Oh, I can't! (She runs out of the room, right.)

JOHNSON: You see? (His triumph has restored the confidence which Dan has shaken. He sits and lights his pipe.)

JERRY: (apologetically) I can't leave her, Dan. If you felt about mother like I do, you'd see I can't leave her.

DAN: (contemptuously) You damn fool! You damn sentimental fool! Because I'm not blubbering about it, you think I don't care about her. A lot you know how I feel. I love her enough to believe her when she says she wants us to go—even if that devil knows how to take advantage of her weakness. Break her heart! It'll break her heart to see you wasting your life slaving here—growing into a stooped old man waiting on him. No, not a man. You'll never be one, and that's what'll break her heart. (There is a pause.)

TOLBY: You're pretty hard, young fellow.

DAN: All right, I'm hard. You know what made me hard. If there were a few more hard people in the world, men like that (nods his head contemptuously at Johnson) wouldn't be able to do what they do. Well, I'm going. I feel like knocking somebody down before I go; but if I did, it wouldn't be him, it'd be you, Jerry. It's not men like him—organizers—that cause the trouble in this world. It's fools like you, Jerry, that let themselves be organized. Good-bye. (Exit left. Tolby stares after him with an astonished grin. Jerry stares after him in misery. Johnson calmly smokes his pipe. After a moment:)

JOHNSON: You'd better go and look after your mother, Jerry (Jerry turns and goes off right, slowly.)

TOLBY: (nervously) Well, Ira, I'd—I guess I'd better be going.

JOHNSON: Sit down and have another cup of coffee. (Takes the coffee pot from the stove and fills their cups.) We'd better get warm before we start out for that meeting at Chester. (Sits down and drinks.)

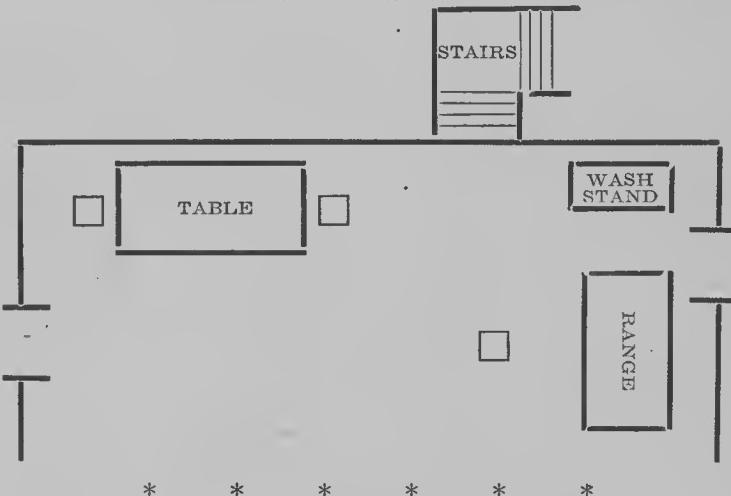
TOLBY: (in admiration) You mean you're going to Chester after—all this?

JOHNSON: (calmly) Why not? Young Dan's right—you've got to be hard. You know where he gets his hardness—he gets it from me. Well, I'll keep on being hard. I don't give a damn about the farm. Jerry and his mother can run it. Jerry's conscientious; he'll make a living out of it somehow. I've got more important affairs on hand. Young Dan made everything clear to me. He saw what I was intended for. I've just been fooling around with this political business up till now; trying to kid myself that I was working for the interests of the de-e-ar farmers. I never did give a damn about their interests, I see that now. I took to this work, as he says, because I'm a born organizer. Well, I'm going to organize from now on, and I'm going to organize for Ira Johnson—but the dear people won't know it, except a few bright ones like Dan, and they're too few to make any difference. Yes, Mr. Darrell's going to have a sore throat tonight, and every other night during the campaign. He's going to have a sore throat on nomination day, and the other parties are going to have a sore throat on election night. (He rises and addresses the audience.) "Ladies and gentlemen: I have just been informed that the other candidates have conceded my election. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart for your splendid support. But it is not for my own humble sake that my gratitude is deepest. My greatest cause for gratitude is that an opportunity has been given me to carry on to new heights the banner of our cause—the cause of freedom, of justice, of equal rights for all and special privileges for none. Our cause has had one triumph tonight. It will be the first of a great series of triumphs which will culminate in a final grand victory of the principles of right—when

Canada shall at last emerge from the shadows of oppression and injustice, of tyranny and servitude, and shall march forward, glorying in her freedom and prosperity, to heights not yet dreamed of!" (He concludes with an impressive gesture and sits).

TOLBY: (*in awed admiration*) Ira! Let me shake your hand—the hand of a man the world will hear of some day.

FAST CURTAIN



Autumn Dusk

HERE, where the star-locked gateway of the blue sky opens
Into the infinite bosom of the purple hills,
We have drunk sunlight from flasks of the golden hours
That summer fills.

Now in a tender west the first of Autumn
Burn—a supernal rose round a core of gold,
And stray winds whisper among gray leaves and grasses
A secret old.

Up from the old gray river that winds through the silence
Like a tarnished strand from the silver skein of the moon
Stretches the stubble-field, dark in the deepening shadows
That gather so soon.

An old witch-willow sifts through her trembling fingers
Gypsy-gold bright from the moon-handled cup of night,
And mutters an ancient charm o'er her stolen treasures
That fade with the light.

Soon shall the old world draw her white shawl about her,
Tenderly wrap her children under the sod,
Then, her work ended, shall spend the long night keeping
A tryst with God.

Air Power

by ARTHUR LEA

PROLOGUE. October 1916.

A small boy lay peacefully sleeping in bed in a Surrey home some 20 miles from London. As he slept, a dim grey shape passed overhead, and a little later the sound of distant gun-fire was heard. Suddenly a spurt of flame appeared; the Zeppelin was hit, and soon the whole countryside was lit up by its ghastly glare, as the great monster slowly crashed to earth. The boy slept on. No one awoke him, and he has never forgotten.

It was still two hours before dawn as a glimmer from its wings revealed the position of the great silvery plane. It lay in the black darkness of the Airport at Athens, this morning in October 1937, waiting to carry us back home on the last stage of its 6-day flight from the Dutch East Indies to Amsterdam. Two nights ago we had slept in an ancient, hilly village in the heart of India: twenty-four hours before we had been crossing the Bridge of Boats over the river Tigris, as our taxi took us from the hotel in Baghdad to the local Airport.

Soon the lights were switched on and the engines were warming up, and as we slowly rose above the roof-tops of Athens we strained our eyes for a glimpse of the Acropolis, that waste of sculptured stone from which arise the ruins of the Parthenon and the Porch of the Caryatids. Last night we had stood there as the setting sun turned the ripples of the water of Salamis Bay to silver and gold, and the hills around stood on guard as sentinels, silently gazing on that ancient scene.

The lights were turned out, and most of the passengers were settling down for some more hours of sleep as the plane emerged into that new world above the thin clouds. Here it was half light, and soon a pink glow was stealing across from the western sky. Gradually the clouds at our feet were tinted with this queer pink light, while the upper air was transformed into a vivid deep blue, and the few flaky wisps of cloud thousands of feet above became a glory of golden red. Ever and anon, there was a glimpse through the clouds below of the waters of the Gulf of Corinth, still wrapped in darkness, and to right and left solitary mountains raised their snowy heads above the clouds to greet us. Small wonder that the gods of ancient Greece would meet in council on Mount Olympus; it was a sight for the gods.

Time passed and colors faded. Now we were heading for the open sea, 1,000 feet above a tramp steamer slowly plowing through the waters where the ships of Rome had sailed 2,000 years before on their way to the rich East. Again the sky turned to crimson, and this time the golden orb of the sun slowly rose over the disappearing mountains of Greece.

The day advanced. Crossing the foot of Italy, we went up the west coast and turned in at Naples. This great and beautiful Bay was spoiled for us by the gloom of civilization, and Vesuvius was belching smoke into the surrounding clouds. We circled over warships in the harbor, and war-planes lined the airdrome. The last we saw of Italy was the ancient River Tiber disappearing in the gloom towards Rome, and it was with real pleasure that we saw the sunlit islands of Elba and Corsica. By dinner-time we were at Marseilles, and the talk then was about whether we should get a view of the Alps.

As we turned north we ran into rain, and by the time we reached Lyons we thought we should see nothing but the dull green of the French countryside. And then the rain stopped. The view lengthened out, and the eastern skyline cleared. And then a second time we saw a sight fit for the gods. The ceiling of dark cloud above us stretched into the far distance, as did the dull green landscape. But the two did not meet; they formed, as it were, a frame, and in between slowly appeared, bathed in sunshine, the whole Alpine Range. We picked out the Jungfrau and the Matterhorn, and then for a breathless moment Mont Blanc freed itself of cloud and stood out above the rest, 100 miles away. The liner rocked and entered another curtain of rain; but we had seen the vision of a lifetime.

Two hours later we sat at the Schipol Airport, Amsterdam, sipping tea, watching the arrival and departure of planes to and from Belgium, Norway, Germany, France, Italy, waiting for the evening plane to London.

EPILOGUE. October, 1940.

An elderly couple are sitting up late at night in their home in Southern England. The Alarm has sounded, and the drone of planes can be heard high up in the sky. They can do nothing, but they know that next day, or the next they will hear the details of another orgy of destruction at Bristol, Birmingham, Coventry . . . They can do nothing, but at least they know that their sons and daughters are all on duty, scattered all over the world, serving . . . And as they sit, perhaps they are thinking of that evening three years before when they were waiting in a thunderstorm at Croydon. Suddenly a flash of lightning had revealed the great silvery plane they were looking for, gleaming in the rain, and with misty eyes they had watched the lights come down to earth and taxi towards them across the flooded concrete. Air-Power: whither?

* * * * *

Calendo

(To A.D.V. to whom tales were badly told by the author.)

*YOU must not wonder now that Memory's whisper
Has called me back to scenes of quiet where
My fingers wandering in the sun seem straying
Thru' yellow hair . . .*

*Blue eyes look up to mine from out the shadows,
And gaze in wonder as I weave the thread
Of Fairey dances in a world of sunlight
That now is dead.*

*On Sunday when, lured by the bell at evening,
Folks went to church and left us, you and me,
I promised stories and you climbed to listen
Upon my knee. . .*

*Now I confess, at times I must have wandered
And mixed the fairies very much with bears,
For 'tween us lay the mists of many summers
And worlds of cares.*

*But I strove bravely e'en when you persisted
In adding here and there stray dogs and cats,
You would insist, in spite of all my pleading
That bears wore hats.*

*Yet I remember that there was agreement,
'Ere on the scene we let the curtain fall,
We opened wide the golden gates of Fancy
Admitting all.*

*Would I that God had hallowed more my footsteps,
And I were better fit to plead for thee,
And maybe He'll forgive and hear at sometime,
A prayer from me.*

*I pray that you may tread the sunlit pathways
And walk with Joy thru' all the coming years,
That you may learn to love in laughter all things lovely,
And know few tears.*

*That in the time to come, whilst when lonely
You wonder why this and that should be,
Then you will know and understand those things much better
That haunted me.*

*And why I tried to paint with quiet colors
Dream tapestries, wove from Beauty's loom,
To lift a lamp though feeble 'gainst the darkness
And light the gloom.*

*And when at night mild stars look in your window,
If you'll remember how I loved the sky,
Then I shall know though mine long and dreamless slumbers
I did not die.*

*Now may the Guard of Golden Heads and Blue Eyes sleeping,
Send dreams to you when kissed by soft moonlight
The shadows deepen and my muse is ended.
I breathe—Good night.*

by W. J. T. CLARK

* * * * *

A Soldier to His Mother

BLOOD runs as thin as water in this place
Where men go gladly from the ceaseless flair
And hiss of bullet-shot to peace in death.
But I who felt your hands upon my hair
In the old twilights when I knelt to pray
And saw you lean across our little gate
Calling me homeward from the waning day,
I cannot go—and see your face, grown strange,
Fade in the mists that thicken steadily,
Nor hear your dear voice calling me, grow faint
Lost in the chasms of eternity!
Love that has ever placed her hand in mine
And led me up through darkness, tender, strong,
Shrinks from my gory touch, and I must go
Alone to slay the path to you. Oh long
The struggle! Bitter the black dark!
But day must dawn. Then silence, and the lark!

by KATHLEEN DAVIDSON

In Defence of Suffering

by SHIRLEY PLANK

SOONER or later each of us comes face to face with bitterness and pain. Inevitably we feel the great weight of suffering that humanity is called upon to bear. We accept our portion with humanity, indifference, or rebellion, according to our several philosophies, but always the same question rises in our minds. What is the purpose behind our pain? Is it the outcome of blind chance, or is it sent by some benign or malignant power whose purpose is beyond our comprehension?

The question has been considered by philosophers throughout the ages, and each has advanced his own explanation of suffering and with the explanation, a plan whereby mankind may eventually be relieved of this intolerable burden. We assume that suffering is evil and that pain is synonymous with tragedy. We fail to realize that pain is tragic only when the sufferer has no reserves of strength with which to meet it. To the man who harbours in his soul a mighty spirit, suffering is less curse than blessing.

It is fortunate that we cannot achieve our purpose and abolish suffering, for inspiration would perish with it. Subconsciously we realize this fact, and not only accept the burdens placed on us by fate, but through our own efforts we increase them. Since time immemorial man has rushed to battle, fought, and died; he has suffered through weary pilgrimages, endured persecution and martyrdom with a willing heart. He has rejoiced to die for a cause, blissfully unaware that if the cause were all, his death would be in vain. For no cause is worth the suffering that any great cause demands: it is the suffering itself which ennobles the cause because it ennobles the sufferer.

When Jesus said that man must lose his life in order to save it, He was not delivering a divine edict; He was reading the hearts of men. Place a man in an earthly paradise and his character degenerates: scourge him from its gates and his slumbering strength awakes. The great man is the man who has suffered greatly, and he who is blessed with happiness must bear the curse of mediocrity. The lesson is plain for all to read; we have but to glance back over the past to see the spirits of the sufferers rising, in noble beauty, above the unscathed rabble. But because we have not the courage to face the obvious truth we misread the message, and wilfully confuse cause and effect. "What a mad, cruel world," we marvel, "that tortures the genius with neglect and indifference, and lauds him when praise can bring no pleasure to him! What ignorant folly to allow the poet, the artist, the philosopher, to starve in misery while he brings forth the masterpiece posterity acclaims!" We will not see how frequently the masterpiece was ennobled by the suffering—how often the expression of genius is a cry wrung from a tortured spirit.

Without the pain which goaded it to wakefulness, the genius of that spirit might have slumbered to oblivion unaware of its own existence, its message unexpressed. Yet do we condemn that pain, and sorrow for that suffering! If we but bore a courage worthy of the souls that sleep within us, we would be reverently thankful for the tortured lives of those great men, and ask no greater blessing for ourselves than a suffering as deep. For no man knows what mighty genius lies deep within his bosom. If we realized our latent possibilities we would not choose a path beside still waters in a green pasture-land. Rather would we pray:

"Lord, lead me into the night and rain and tempest. Let me lose my way in the pain-filled dark; let terror and suffering compass me about, until my soul cries out in pain, until my tortured spirit utters, in its agony, the highest, noblest cry it can conceive. And if that cry shall soar above the storm, shall reach the world of men, and hovering high shall, in its haunting beauty, draw men's souls to higher, purer air—then, Lord, my suffering shall not have been in vain."

Prairie Episode

by MAXWELL BRAITHWAITE

I SCOFFED at Harris with fine scorn. "You and your unselfishness! How much of it do you find abroad these days, with everybody grabbing everything they can get and hanging to it for dear life?"

But it was hopeless. Harris is an incurable idealist and will never believe that the world isn't all quixotism and lofty motives.

We were travelling in the prairie provinces, had been for two days. At regular fifteen-minute intervals our train would stop for one of the villages that dot the track like beads on a string. They had a great uniformity, those villages—three or four stolid grain elevators, a street parallel to the track, a school, a church and a dozen or so bedraggled houses.

Well, when you have spent two whole days looking at nothing but telephone poles and fences, and wheat fields all in the same stage of development, you welcome any diversion, even a theoretical argument.

For a whole day we'd been at it and the thing was fast getting into the shout-and-rave stage. Harris branded me a cynic; I said he was a mawkish old fool. We were getting nowhere. There was just no way of settling the thing—or so we thought.

And then, just when Harris was getting set to come at me again, this girl got on the train and deposited her luggage in the seat ahead of ours. She was about eighteen, definitely small town, a pretty little creature. But it was her expression, the isn't-life-glorious look on her face, that made you look twice. This we sensed at once, was no ordinary train trip for her. No, this was a big day in her life—perhaps the biggest.

Instead of sitting down she stood in the aisle and eagerly scanned the other occupants of the car. Suddenly her face lit up with so much downright happiness that we couldn't help turning to see what could be the object of such devotion.

Coming toward her from further down the car was a tall, fine-looking lad of about twenty.

"Edgar!" the girl cried, holding out both hands to him, oblivious of the curious eyes about her. "Oh, darling!"

The boy started to take her hands, then his face changed and he dropped his own. He turned his head away as though to evade her eyes, and he didn't say anything.

The girl pulled him down into the seat beside her. "Darling, darling, I made it," her voice rushed out merrily. "Just think we are actually on our way. Isn't it glorious. Oh, Mum and Dad made an awful fuss, but I remembered what you said, dearest."

Still the boy remained silent. There was something wrong here. I'm no eavesdropper, but I listened in on this conversation.

"What's the matter, darling?" Now the girl's voice was half-kidding, half-serious, "You're not sorry are you—sorry that this is your wedding day?"

"No—no," the boy spoke for the first time, unsteadily, "no, I'm not sorry. That is—"

"Why Edgar, what's the matter? Is anything wrong?"

"No, everything's all right."

"But you're acting so strangely. Look at me darling. You're different somehow."

"I haven't changed any."

"But you have, you're not yourself at all. Have you forgotten all those things we said?"

"Say, you didn't expect those wild plans to really work out, did you?"

"Wild plans! What are you saying! Darling, there is something wrong. Didn't you get the money? It doesn't matter, dear, I have quite a little. We'll get along. I don't mind a few hardships, honest I don't. We have to make some sacrifices. Why, last Monday it was you who was so enthusiastic, about going to the city and getting a job and all."

"That was last Monday."

"So that's it. Oh, darling, you frightened me for a second. Don't worry, dear, if things aren't right just now, we can wait. As long as we love each other it won't be hard waiting—for weeks, even months if necessary."

"It ain't that. I got the money alright. It's just that—well—"

"Edgar, what are you trying to tell me? That you've changed your mind, that you

don't want us to be married—that—that you don't love me. Look at me, Edgar do you love me?"

A painful silence. I found myself leaning forward, tensely awaiting the boy's reply. At last it came in a forced, unnatural voice: Listen kid, you shouldn't take a guy so seriously. If you go believing every guy that says he loves you—well, you're going to get yourself into a pack of trouble."

I glanced at Harris in the seat beside me. He was fairly squirming with rage and indignation. I was afraid for a moment that he was going to get up and kick that young cad right there and then. I nudged him. This would settle our argument.

But the girl was speaking again, and now her voice was vibrant with contempt. "Edgar Peterson, you are low and vile. I suppose you think it a good joke that I believed your 'line', that I broke with my parents and sacrificed my good name—that I loved you. Well, I did love you. I thought you were strong and fine, but I see that you are cheap and cowardly. Oh, how I hate you. Nothing you can ever do or say will make me stop hatin' you, you—you sneak—" her voice broke in spite of herself.

The youth made no reply. He had slumped far down in the seat.

Then the train stopped for the next station. The girl hurriedly gathered her belongings and, head defiantly erect, left the train.

The boy let her go without a word. Then he got up and started back down the car. Harris, more purple than ever, leaped up and followed him. I followed Harris. There was no telling what he might do in that knight-in-shining-armour mood.

Near the back of the car our quarry slipped into a seat and Harris pulled up in front of him and began a blistering tirade. I don't think the boy even saw him. His face was dead white, and may I never again see so much remorse and misery concentrated in an expression.

Then I noticed the Mountie in the seat beside him.

Quickly I shoved my indignant friend down the aisle. As we went by I heard the unmistakable click of handcuffs, and I just barely caught the boy's muttered remark. It sounded like, "Thanks, Sarge, for the ten minutes. At least I didn't welsh on that."

* * * * *

Snow Lay on the Ground

SNOW lay on the ground,
And deep cold in my heart.

The bleak face of tragedy, stark with regret,
Froze the depths of my soul, and I could not forget,
Nor find memory sweet in sadness, and yet
My heart leaped, though Love had taken Mirth from her,
At the laugh of a child.

BITTER wind howled around,
And I stood apart.

Spring's far silver call, and the chant of a bird,
The sweet small things of earth, I half-felt and half-heard,
But life's pulse was dead, till suddenly stirred,
The whole wide world burst into glorious summer—
For someone had smiled.

by AMY DOWNEY

For Freedom

by GEORGE ECKHOFF

IT WAS one of those dull grey days with a few snow flakes fluttering leisurely to earth. The snow lay heavy on the spruce and fir trees along each side of the road, bending their branches downward like weary arms. Deep, rounded snow banks lay to either side of the trail. There was a stillness in the air, peaceful, yet pregnant with anticipation.

As I trudged along the road I saw a grey wisp of smoke curling upward apparently from some cottage now hidden from my sight. As I came closer I found this little home almost hidden in a grove of evergreen and surrounded by a whitewashed wooden fence. The gate was ajar and as there was something inviting about the appearance of this little cottage I decided to go in. Frankly, I was beginning to feel a bit tired for I had already come about five miles, this morning, from the village of Helinska.

When I rapped at the door, I was met by a kindly-faced little old lady, and after struggling vainly with what little Finnish I knew to utter a greeting, she greeted me in very good English which still held a strong trace of her mother tongue.

"Come right in my friend. You must be tired from struggling through that deep snow. Let me have your coat. There, take this chair, close to the fire. Paavo, get some fresh water and an armful of wood—that's a dear."

The little old lady bustled away with my coats to put them in a bed-room adjoining the kitchen. Paavo, a fair-haired, blue-eyed, stalwart young fellow of about twenty, arose and prepared to do his mother's bidding, while I, beginning now to feel the effects of the cold, drew a cozy, old-fashioned chair close to the stove and began removing my overshoes.

"This is indeed a pleasure to meet someone in Finland who can speak my language. I have such a struggle to express myself."

The old lady gave a bright little laugh.

"Oh we used to live in America until seven years ago when the depression struck us. We learned to speak English there." And she fussed about the stove, shaking it up and pulling the kettle to the front.

"But tell me," I said, "why did you come back to Finland?"

And as my friendly hostess hurried about to prepare a cup of hot coffee for me, she revealed a story that made a deep impression on me so that today I feel she is one of the most striking personalities I have ever met.

"Well, you see, it is this way," she said, "I emigrated to America with my parents in the 1890's and we took up a farm in Kansas. There I went to school, and when I was about twenty-two I married Paal Nurmi. We, too, farmed till 1933, when we lost everything we owned in the Dust Bowl. My husband had always wanted to come back to Finland, so we gathered up what money we could and set out—the four of us, my two sons, Paal and I.

"After our arrival here in Helinska, my husband and boys tried to get work in the lumber-mills. Paal and Jan were employed as wood-cutters, while Paavo stayed home to help me. About three years ago my husband was killed by a falling tree—"

Here the little old lady stopped speaking for a moment and I thought I caught a faint trace of a sob.

"Here, my dear, pull up your chair to the table. Paavo, will you bring the coffee pot here. Thank you."

After she had poured me a cup of steaming rich coffee, and passed me a slice of the tastiest home-made bread I had ever eaten, she resumed her story.

"Jan still worked at the lumber mill until our country became involved in war with Russia—"

A long deep silence fell over all of us, Paavo set down his cup of coffee and stared at the window. The muscles of his jaws tightened and I saw a fierce gleam come into those ordinarily kind blue eyes. Mrs. Nurmi sat thinking for some time before she spoke.

"As soon as war broke out Jan was called up. That was the last I saw of him," she said in a slow sad voice. "That winter was, perhaps, one of the most severe we have ever experienced. Poor Jan was out there fighting in the snow with our little army in its heroic attempt to withstand the Russian hordes. No one knows what he must have

suffered, but being a mother I imagine I can feel it."

"In the latter part of January the Russians began their aerial bombardment, and of course the Helinska lumber-mills were an objective. Our little house was not far away from the mills, and, one Saturday afternoon—I can remember it as well as yesterday—I was coming back from the store and was just about to turn in the gate when I heard a screaming whistle, and then a blinding flash. When I recovered my senses I found myself in the Doctor's surgery, swathed in bandages and a sharp pain stabbing my left shoulder. 'What happened?' I cried. The Doctor told me that my left arm had been torn out. I felt sick all over.

"After several weeks in bed I was able to move about. Our home was in ruins, but Paavo and many of our kind friends fixed up this little cottage for us."

"It was when I had returned here and was beginning to feel a bit stronger that they broke the news of Jan's death. At that instant everything seemed to go black before me and I wondered how many more blows I would have to suffer."

We sat in silence for a few minutes, each of us deep in our own thoughts, then she said, as she straightened up in her chair and a brave smile on her lips, "But I'm not surrendering. I still have another arm and another son left to fight for freedom."

As I walked back to Helinska I could not help marvelling at the spirit of courage, loyalty, and determination of this little old lady.

"God give us more of her kind."

* * * * *

The Sea

I AM in love with the purple twilight
From a dim plain,
With her star-sweet raiment blown and drifted
By the grey rain.

I AM in love with the silver laughter
Of a bright sea-maid
As she binds her emerald hair with a slender ribbon
Of amber shade.

I AM in love with the starlight falling
On a blue rock,
And the moon-canoe with Indian Summer in it
Drifting to dock.

I AM in love with the lift and fall of the silver
Of sea-gull's wings,
Flashing above the blue waves' restless brightness
Where the sunlight swings.

I AM in love with the wistful water creeping
Over the lea,
With the wonder of life and the mystery of death within it—
I am in love with the Sea.

by KATHLEEN DAVIDSON

The Strange Affair at Gopher Hollow

by DONALD GREENE

(After the manner of "Saki")

AND so, droned old Inspector Hailes, "I advised the board to give her thirty days notice of dismissal, and agreed to support them in case she appealed to the Department."

"I think you were quite justified, Inspector," said Inspector Richards, nodding his little bald head. "We cannot be too careful in our supervision of the characters of young teachers. They have a very important duty to perform in the moral guidance of the youth of our province. Patience, discretion, affection—these we must demand in our teachers. Now, let me tell you an interesting experience of mine—"

Inspector McQuaid was bored. Inspector Hailes and Inspector Richards were his guests during the teachers' convention, but Inspector McQuaid couldn't seem to work up much enthusiasm for them. The Thursday night poker game was going on in the little room down at the hotel and he wanted to be there. He drummed on the arm of his chair, re-crossed his legs, took his watch out of his spacious waistcoat. Ten o'clock. He couldn't suggest going to bed yet. That old idiot Richards was away on another of his interminable professional anecdotes.

He took another sip of Mrs. McQuaid's chokecherry wine, three years old and quite porty. Hailes and Richards had accepted a glass with a little tittering: Inspector McQuaid's unprofessional habits caused some mild misgivings among his colleagues. But the wine had not revealed any sources of interest in them to their host, and had only oiled the gates which imperfectly barred a flood of shop-talk. Inspector McQuaid, however, aside from his urgent desire to get away, felt quite comfortable. The bottle was on the table beside him.

"And afterwards," chirped Inspector Richards in conclusion, "the deputy minister told me that my handling of the situation was as skillful as any case he had heard of." He looked around for approval.

Inspector Hailes nodded ponderously. "Now in 1924—" he began; but his host interrupted him.

"Remarkable, remarkable, Richards," he rumbled. Very commendable of you, indeed. Now, let me tell you of an odd thing that happened in my inspectorate not so long ago. I want your professional opinion on it." The big man settled back in his chair. "Another glass, Richards? Hailes? No? Mrs. McQuaid will be offended—but perhaps it's as well. Hard on your nerves, and all that; besides I think there's only one glassfull left." He poured it for himself, and commenced.

* * * *

I have never been able to explain this to myself (he said); but perhaps you, with your long experience, may be able to help me. In our profession, with its monotonous round of duties, we tend, perhaps, to become hardened materialists, and to lose whatever small perception we may have once had of that mysterious borderland between the human and the supernatural. "Trailing clouds of glory from afar"—Wordsworth, you know, gentlemen. (Hailes and Richards nodded vigorously.) But since this, even I have sometimes wondered if there is such a thing as divine, or perhaps I should say diabolical intervention.

Well. If you drive out south of town about thirty miles, you come to Gopher Hollow. It is as desolate a stretch of prairie as you ever laid your eyes on. All the dust storms come from there.

I suppose that the dismal scenery has a bad effect on the dispositions of the Gopher Hollow people. At any rate, ten years ago Gopher Hollow had the name of having one of the worst schools in my inspectorate. No teacher every stayed there more than four months; if the trustees and the parents didn't chase her out, the pupils, the toughest little gang of rowdies I've ever seen, made life unbearable for her. One pretty little Normalite after another went to Gopher Hollow to teach, and came back in three months, a nervous wreck. I was at my wits' end. I tried my hardest to get them to engage someone who might be able to bring some order into the school, but no. They were quite proud of their reputation.

It was on the morning of May the fourteenth—I may say that I have reconstructed the story from my investigation afterwards. They sent for me in a great hurry, and they were hardly coherent, but after much questioning I managed to piece it together. Of course there was nothing I could do then.

On the morning of May the fourteenth, as happened several times a year, the school was assembled, waiting for the arrival of their new teacher. The children were looking forward to it; they knew that they had the worst school in this part of the province and they felt they had to live up to their name. So they had arrived at the school early to prepare the scene. There was a mouse in the teacher's desk and a tack on her chair; impudent answers had been thought up and ugly faces had been practised. At nine o'clock all was ready. It was arranged that when the new teacher entered, they would break out together into a blood-curdling yell which was one of their specialties.

Nine o'clock struck. A sweet voice from the teacher's desk was heard to say, "Good morning, dear children." The children gazed at the spot in astonishment. There was no one in the room but themselves.

Then a loud report, like a crack of thunder, was heard.

(Here Inspector McQuaid paused to apply a match to his cigar, which had gone out.)

Needless to say, they forgot the welcoming yell which they had prepared. They stared spellbound at the desk. Their new teacher was standing in their midst. She was not a young woman; possibly she was in her fifties. She was dressed in a long black cloak, and wore a black hat with a conical crown from which a few locks of grey hair straggled down on her forehead. Her nose was definitely Roman. Her teeth were not in good condition: indeed only a few of them remained in the front of her mouth; but with them she grinned affectionately at her charges. A few wisps of smoke that had accompanied her arrival curled slowly out of the window.

After a moment, one of the pupils gasped out: "Please, miss, are you our new teacher?"

She directed her smile lovingly on him:

"Yes, John, I'm your new teacher. You had arranged a little surprise for me; but I got my surprise in first, didn't I? Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, hal HA, HA, HA, HA!" Each burst of laughter began on a higher and more hysterical note. It is a sound pedagogical practice to begin the school day with merriment, but the pupils felt that it could be carried too far. They involuntarily shuddered. There was a pause.

But they were gallant pupils, and they never had been cowed by a teacher before. They plucked up courage.

Please, miss, what is your name?" asked one.

"I have many names," said the newcomer, softly, "in the place where I come from; but for the present you may call me Miss Brimstone."

"Won't you sit down, Miss Brimstone?" said Jimmy White, a little more boldly. It was Jimmy who had planted the tack on the teacher's chair.

"Sit down? Oh, certainly, Jimmy," said Miss Brimstone, graciously. "The class may be seated, too."

They sat. Jimmy sprang to his feet with a howl. "How did that tack get back on my seat?" he cried indignantly.

"Tack, Jimmy?" asked Miss Brimstone. "What tack, dear?"

Jimmy blushed. "Aw, gee," he muttered, "I guess—I guess there wasn't any tack."

"Just an imaginary one, of course, Jimmy," Miss Brimstone assented briskly. "I often find my pupils troubled with too much imagination. Now we shall call the roll." Miss Brimstone opened a drawer of her desk to take out the school register, and a slight shade crossed her amiable face. She turned her gaze on Louise Stevens.

"Louise," she said, "what is that I see in your hair?"

Louise put up her hands in curiosity. Then she screamed. A mouse fell to the floor.

"You can't tell me that's an imaginary mouse," said Miss Brimstone, with a little sigh. "I must insist that my pupils follow the health rules; the first is, comb your hair every morning before you come to school. Tommy, dear, just take that mouse outside, will you please?"

Tommy picked up the creature by its tail and made his way out the door. As he passed behind Miss Brimstone, he made a face. Tommy was noted for his faces. Just

what happened then is not quite clear. The children report that in a moment Tommy came running back into school with a white face, babbling out some incoherent tale of the mouse's having turned into a dragon.

"Well, well," said Miss Brimstone, placidly. "That must have been Jocko my pet dragon. He's a mischievous little thing and after this I must keep him tied up to my desk. But you needn't be afraid of Jocko, Jocko likes little children!" And here Miss Brimstone gave way to another hysterical crescendo of laughter. The children sat silent, very silent.

A confident rat-tat-tat was heard at the door.

"That must be Mr. Sparks," said one of the pupils, with some relief.

"Mr. Sparks?" asked Miss Brimstone, with interest.

"He's chairman of the board," the pupils exclaimed. "He's a bachelor. He always comes to make a date with the teacher on the first day of school. If they won't go to dances with him, he fires them."

"Bet he won't date this one," a pupil muttered gloomily.

"How sweet of him!" sighed Miss Brimstone. She produced a vanity case, powdered her hooked nose, and called. "Come in!"

Eddie Sparks entered. He was smartly dressed in a clean pair of overalls, and he carried a bouquet; but his expectant smile dropped when he saw the new teacher.

"But you aren't the teacher we engaged!" he exclaimed. "We hired that pretty little blonde, Miss Perkins!"

"Oh, surely not," smiled Miss Brimstone. "You engaged me, don't you remember? Me, Helena Brimstone. Miss Brimstone, unfortunately, but Helena to my friends. And I shall count you one of my friends, Mr. Sparks."

"But—but—" Eddie sputtered.

"Oh, come, come, Mr. Sparks . . . Eddie," said Miss Brimstone. "Of course you remember engaging me. Why, here is my contract with the board!" She darted a skinny claw into one of his pockets. "It's made out for five thousand dollars a year! Why, you generous man! And here—" She produced a paper from another pocket. "Here is a cheque for my first month's salary! How perfectly lovely of you! Now I can buy some clothes for the dance you are going to take me to tonight." Eddie shuddered. "I think I'll go and do my shopping now. You won't mind if I leave my class a little early, will you, Eddie—dear?" She giggled, then pecked him cooly on the cheek.

Another thunderclap was heard. There was a faint smell of sulphur in the room.

Gopher Hollow never saw Miss Brimstone again. But I assure you, gentlemen, that the district has never caused the least trouble from that day to this. And Mr. Sparks does not try to make dates with school teachers any more.

* * *

Inspector Hailes and Inspector Richards sat looking a little dazed. Inspector McQuaid looked at his watch. It was half-past ten; there was still plenty of time to get into the poker game. He rose:

"And now, gentlemen, if you have no more of your professional experiences to relate . . ." Inspectors Hailes and Richards shook their heads dumbly. "Then I shall wish you a very good night. I have some—h'm!—some researches to make into the statistics of probability, and you, I'm sure, need a good night's rest. Good night, gentlemen."

"Good night," said Inspector Hailes.

"Good night," said Inspector Richards.

Youth

SHE scrambled up the rutted, grass-grown trail
And reached the summit breathless; halting there
A moment, like some eager, fairy child
Pausing to hear the distant elfin pipes
That faintly, sweetly sing, and ever lure
Her dancing, youth-winged feet.

THUS, buoyant, poised for flight,
With up-flung head she stands. The sunny breeze
Ruffles her shining hair, and gently smoothes
Her thin, soft gown, more sweetly to reveal
The youthful curve of hip and waist and thigh
And hurrying bosom.

One brown hand,
Outstretched in joyous welcome, carelessly
Clutches a crimson poppy—
A single, pagan bloom.

OEAGER nymph! O laughing, breathless spirit
Glowing with youth! This moment cannot last.
Another instant, and your bare brown feet
Will scamper past that rugged boulder, bearing you
Beyond my ken.

Yet will you leave behind
A vision of youth incarnate:
Of buoyant youth, with happy face up-turned
In eager expectation, heeding not
The fragile treasure that your fingers hold.

AND you, ye crimson poppy, sorrow not
That this same summer breeze which now caresses
Your face with gentle fingers, the next instant
Will grasp your velvet petals one by one
And toss them down to wither on the grass.
Glow, rather! Glow with pride! And die content
To know that for one fleeting, breathless moment
You touched perfection.

by KATHLEEN DAVIDSON

The “Calgary Eye Opener”

by DONALD GREENE

WHEN it is propounded that every civilization produces its distinctive literature, Canada need not complain—as she does—of having been left out in the cold. Her folk-ballads may be non-existent, her Dickensies may be diluted, and her poetic giants may be mild spinsters from Victoria; but she has had *The Calgary Eye Opener*.

The *Eye Opener* was a humorous publication which appeared at irregular intervals from 1902 till the Great War. Its style was not an imitation of British whimsy or American smartness, but was straightforward, red-blooded, two-fisted, slam-bang, rip-roaring Western Canadian humour. It was the perfect expression of the spirit of the “boom days” in the West.

They were great times on the Prairies, those before the War. Homesteaders from the East and immigrants from Europe and the States were pouring in by the thousands. Three transcontinental railways were pushing their parallel lines across the western provinces, cities were being laid out overnight, fabulous sums were being made by real-estate speculators. Farmers took up huge tracts of land, but did not build houses on them “because,” they said, “we’ll make our pile in five years, and then we’ll go to California or the Coast to live.” Never were people merrier; and to add to their gaiety, the *Calgary Eye Opener* appeared.

It was a smeary four-page rag, conforming to no known journalistic principles. It was made up of cartoons, political and lay, and slightly more than *risque* — but original—stories, cemented together with pungent personal comment by the editor. The pulpit and the editorial desk denounced it, God-fearing fathers thrashed their sons when they caught them snickering over it, and members of the Ladies’ Aid whispered about it in delighted horror; but ranchers would set out on a forty-mile drive to Calgary or Moose Jaw or Medicine Hat on the merest rumour that a new issue of the *Eye Opener* was out. There were never enough copies, and each had to go the rounds of all the choice spirits in the neighborhood. There is said to be no complete file of the *Eye Opener* in existence; that is a notable testimonial to its popularity.

Its editor, Bob Edwards, has become something of a legend in the West. By trade, he was a little of everything, with the printer predominating. By temperament, he was that rare thing, the happy man. He had found his proper environment in the early West. A born comedian, he naturally gravitated to Canadian politics, about the greatest source of laughter in existence. There were horrendous tales of his drinking, but it turned out later that most of them were invented by himself. He stated, for instance, that the cause of the irregular publication dates of the *Eye Opener* was simply the irregularity of his capacity. When he needed another jug of whiskey, he would write another *Eye Opener*. Rabelais would have liked Bob Edwards.

The *Eye Opener* was not, however, entirely humour for the sake of humour. It had one serious purpose, to combat political sham. Canadian politicians have always been cursed with the smugness of British politicians without their comparative disinterestedness, and with the venialty of American politicians, without the Americans’ healthy cynicism about it. They were too much for the *Eye Opener*. It gleefully gave battle with the saints, and one halo after another fell.

The *Eye Opener’s* special aversion was the Minister of the Interior. The *Eye Opener* did not like the Methodists, Liberals, and prohibitionists, and Sir Clifford Sifton was all three. An epic warfare, waged with cartoon, satire, and innuendo, went on for several years. But the *Eye Opener* was hampered by no inhibitions, and “Clifford Snifter,” as the *Eye Opener* always called Sir Clifford, even with the *Free Press* behind him, was conceded to be no match for the little rag from Calgary.

Sifton disposed of, the *Eye Opener* cast around for another source of amusement. It found it in the Canadian Navy. Parliament decided that Canada should contribute to her own naval defence; but the nationalists insisted that Canada must show her independence, and instead of sharing the expense of the Imperial Navy, should build one of her own. They had their way. But, alas! Warships were expensive, and in the end the Canadian Navy consisted of two insignificant vessels, one to defend the Atlantic coast and one the Pacific. The absurdity of the situation and the insincerity of

those who, for political purposes, had brought it about, became the object of the *Eye Opener's* satire. The paper found a small cut of two ridiculous ships plunging through a heavy sea. It christened these tubs the "Niobe" and the "Rainbow", and published the picture two or three times in every issue, variously captioning it "The Canadian Navy in Pursuit of the German Fleet," "The Canadian Navy Gallantly Defending the Honour of the Liberal Party," or "The Canadian Navy on Its Way to Lady Sifton's Reception." The result was that for many years the mere mention of the Canadian Navy was enough to quell any proponent of Canadian self-sufficiency.

Then came 1941 and the end of the old West. The cities are still here, but they have become very prosaic. The "temporary" shacks that the farmers built are still here, but their owners are still living in them. The thousands of miles of parallel railway tracks are still here too, and most taxpayers wish they weren't. But the *Eye Opener* died with the old west. A few copies are still to be found in prairie attics, where old ranchmen occasionally grin over the half-forgotten allusions. I believe there is still a magazine by that name published, of all places, in Minneapolis. It circulates in pool parlours. *Sic transit.*

* * * *

Poetry

HERE on this high green hill I have planted my flowers
Little wild things that are simple and tender and sweet
Go lightly O men who may wander my hill of dreams
For heavy and hard are your feet.

*And if you should pluck my buds though they wither and die
I shall be glad if in some dim room of your heart
They blossom in fragrance and color a little grey thought
That silently waited apart.*

by KATHLEEN DAVIDSON

Christianity and Democracy

by WILLIAM HORDERN

DEMOCRACY, today in Canada, sits upon an exalted pedestal. Every newspaper, every public speaker chants its praise. In the midst of this popularity, it is only natural that some institutions should lay claim to having been its founder. Among those who boast of this position, is the Christian Church. To many this may seem merely a desire to steal a part of democracy's lime-light. But to me this claim seems well founded.

If we want to prove that democracy owes its authorship to Christianity, we must travel back through history to a time long before Christ. Here we are suddenly confronted by the glowing light of a democracy. Here stands Greece with a democracy, in some respects, superior to our own. Surely it would seem to follow that, since democracies existed before the time of Christ, Christianity cannot claim to be their original founder.

But let us examine this early democracy a little closer. It was wonderful in many ways—but its foundation was slavery. The Athenian could give one of every three days to the state, because at home he had a slave to do his work. Furthermore, the slavery, at times, reached a brutality from which even Simon Legree would shrink. Slaves were cheap and military conquests flooded the markets. Therefore owners thought nothing of working their men to death. Thus Greek democracy did not pretend to give an equality to all. Even the enlightened humanist, Aristotle, could maintain that some men were born to be slaves. Man *qua* man was not necessarily sacred.

So with all pre-Christian attempts at democracy. There was no recognition of the equality of men. No ancient people ever accepted the theory that all men had an equal claim to happiness. It was left to Christ to introduce this revolutionary concept. He taught that each man was sacred, simply because all were the sons of one Father. In each man was a spark of divinity, a light of reason. Greater riches, greater ability, did not make a man more worthy. The servant who was able to bring only four talents to his master received the same reward as he who brought ten talents. The seed of true democracy had been sown.

But years were to blend into centuries before this new doctrine could bear fruit. The church, at times, was so blinded by the brilliance of the precious jewel it held, that it failed to recognize its value. Thus official Christendom was to walk hand in hand with tyrannical monarchy. God, himself, was called upon to keep the lower classes conscious of their inferiority. But just as the seed is finally burst by the surging life within, so was the Christian church. Christ's clarion call of equality broke through its barriers to beckon men onward to freedom.

John Locke, often called the father of democracy, was inspired by Christianity. In his plea for democracy, he maintained that the founder of all social organization lay in the individual man. Why?—Because, as Christ taught, God has given to every man reason. And since this spark of divinely given reason, or soul, lies in all, every intelligent mind has the right to come to its own conclusions.

In the Declaration of Independence, the father of all democratic documents, we find the concepts of Christ: that all men are born equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. Remove those concepts from the declaration and its vitality has flown.

So it has been the teachings of Christ that have led men down the road of democracy. There have been, it is true, many democratic reformers who have had no direct connection with the church or Christianity. But these men owed a debt of which they were unaware. They were steeped in ideals of justice, love, and equality that had had their birth two thousand years ago on the sunny hills of Galilee. They did not realize their debt to Christ, because the teachings of Christ, once so radical, have become self-evident facts, accepted by all.

But not only did Christianity sow the seeds of democracy; it today supplies the sunlight necessary for their growth. Thus, countries that have repudiated God, soon have repudiated the worth of the individual. Russia, although it may not have realized it, set up a state built upon Christian ethics. "Not mine for me but ours for us," certainly follows logically from Christian teaching. But Russia thought they could leave God out;

as a result their experiment has hardly followed Christian lines. Millions of Russians were allowed to starve so that wheat could be sold to purchase machinery for the plan. The climax to Russia's infamy came when, after signing the pact that gave Hitler the courage to precipitate the present war, it entered upon a policy of aggression that rivalled Germany's in its repulsiveness.

Of course, in the case of Russia it may be objected that the individual was not sacred under the Tsarist regime, although the church was there given a prominent place. The answer is that, formerly, Russia tried to find God without the use of Christian ethics in its national life. That is as impossible as to have true Christian ethics without God.

So we may conclude that Christianity is the most important bulwark of democracy. If we are to preserve democracy, we must keep the spirit of Christ alive. But we also must remember that as we judge our democracy by Christian standards, we cannot proclaim it to be perfect. Democracy is not an achievement to be worshipped: democracy is an opportunity. The greatest opportunity that it offers is the opportunity of establishing the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

* * * * *

Teachers

by DONALD GREENE

EVERYONE, in his lifetime, has made the acquaintance, or has had the acquaintance thrust upon him, of a number of teachers. They were doubtless of all sizes, shapes, and description, from the dimpled little kindergarten teacher to the portly college president, not omitting the absent-minded high-school history teacher and the old crank in the fourth grade, whom you hated, but who nevertheless pounded long division into your head. In spite of their seeming variety, however, you will find, on a little reflection, that they fall quite easily into three groups—the haphazard, the systematic, and the enthusiastic.

The haphazard teacher is the one who believes in taking things as they come to him. He is the eternal exponent of *laissez faire*. He is usually good-tempered—what is there to teaching anyway?—A friend and companion to his students, a willing listener to parents and trustees, an organizer of picnics, a collector for benevolent funds. In the female incarnation, the haphazard teacher is usually the lady of the primary grades whom "the children just love." She bundles her little dears into their overcoats every night and sends them off with a parting kiss. She is the heroine of fiction of the cheerful, inspiring type. Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm had such a teacher. Under her ministrations, Rebecca remained ignorant of the name of the capital of the United States, but she accomplished something much more valuable, the author informs us, when she beautified Rebecca's frizzed hair and thus saved the day at a community celebration. Her male counterparts are rather more numerous. They are the offerers of "snap courses," the pompous principals who have attained their posts through seniority and are waiting placidly for death or superannuation to carry them off, the mild high-school teachers who have high standing in the Elks and who paint the scenery for the annual school operetta.

These teachers never cut a very wonderful figure when examination time comes round; but they meditate peacefully that, after all, the facts we acquire in school count for little—it is the broad influence on character, the unrepressed development of the childish soul, that really matters. The women make good, unassuming wives; the men, good gardeners or country gentlemen. In the school, their sweetness and light is apt to pall with the passing of time.

The systematic teacher, on the other hand, leaves nothing to chance. He has a method; it may be the Winnetka plan, or the Montessori method, or the time-table laid down by the superintendent, or simply "three-and-a-half pages a day will bring us to the end of the course by Easter," but whatever it is, he has in it the sublime faith of a Diafoirus. Use such and such texts, he says, teach such and such a fact at such and such a time—there lies the only hope of salvation. He is usually surrounded by others of the same faith, and is thus sheltered from any cold wind of doubt that might assail him.

Especially to be noted in the methodic teacher are his reverence for constituted authority and his contempt for mere results. He has his particular Bible, depending upon what sect he patronizes. To him, there is no God but Rousseau, or Froebel, or Dewey; and Washburne, or Montessori, or Gates is his prophet as the case may be. His authorities may disagree, but no stray gust from their squabbles ever ruffles his complacence. One giant may even oust another; he accepts the new regime and the new set of laws with the same blind faith that he did the old. As for the results of his system, he is indifferent to them. He may see growing up around him a generation more self-centered, more ill-mannered, less literate and less law-abiding than the old. He may bewail the fact; but it never occurs to him to impute any blame to the method of education he professes.

Most teachers nowadays are of the systematic kind. We have all had them and know them. They are equable, just, efficient, and about as inspiring as an automobile assembly line.

The enthusiastic teacher is a more vague figure. He teaches, poor fool, for the love of it. His enthusiasm may be for life in general, for his particular subject, or for the development of his pupils. Perhaps we have had the fortune to encounter it at some time, whether in the backwoods schoolhouse or the great college, in a world-renowned lecturer or in the aforesaid old crank who drummed long division relentlessly into us day after day until we couldn't forget it if we tried.

Mencken once proposed that no elementary teacher should be permitted to go beyond Grade Eight herself. His point was that further instruction would lessen the importance in her own mind of the three R's which, after all, it is her business to teach. Perhaps he was right. How few teachers attain the higher enthusiasm that comes with great scholarship and great sympathy! Perhaps even a crabbed enthusiasm that is confined to long division is better than no enthusiasm at all. Perhaps the old Latin dominies and the old penmanship instructors with their gorgeous and utterly useless doves and curliques were able, in their narrow ways, to impart something more precious to their pupils than are even the best efficiency experts of today.

* * * * *

They Broke Out Even

by L. N. M.

THEY came to the man who thought much and they said, "There is some one who needs you. He is a man with a defeated look on his face, and he stands there, now, over the deep street, and he wonders 'Life or death?' We will take you to him . . ."

The man with a defeated look turned to him, "Why?" He didn't throw his head back and laugh mirthlessly, but he did say "Why not? Tell me one reason why not, and I shall go back with you."

The man who thought much said, "There is much in the world for everyone. Come, and I will show it to you. I will show you pretty children playing happily—you will see much to live for in that. And I will show you tall, slim, beautiful ladies, who smile cleanly at you, and laugh much and healthily. And you shall feel the ecstasy of good music, and see the beauty of a soft evening in July—the beauty of sunset and shadow, sighing winds and lazy clouds. The easy, pleasant, companionship of cozy friends shall be yours. You shall retain the lazy, easy comfort which only a home of laughing children and a quiet mother possesses. Come, there is much waiting for you."

But the man only said, "I shall go now." The thinker turned away, and the defeated man was no more.

The man thought, "I had something to do—and failed to do it. I failed, as I fail now, because I really do not know myself. And I knew—he knew! And so now he is no more. But he must be wrong—and I must be wrong—there is a reason—somewhere—let me find it." "The ecstasy of good music"—and so he turned the radio on. "We wish to announce that the program of chamber music usually on at this hour, will be replaced by the 'Swing-Kings' dance music,"—"Trot to health and success with Potter's Liver Pills." "The terrific onslaught of British Infantry is producing a telling effect, the bewildered Germans retreating at many places." He turned it off.

As he left the hotel the phrase 'pretty children playing' came to him as he passed

boys paying off on the lottery of 'Life, or Death?' amongst the excited crowd. Then he thought of the 'tall, slim, beautiful, ladies' and he knew now he would find the answer. There was Mary who worked at the corner drug store—she always smiled at him as though she knew—she must know! He hurried. "Who—Mary? Oh, yes—we had to dismiss her last week—this hot weather has kinda cut our business down. She came back two days ago though—said she would take any job we had to offer—but you know how it is—can't let our sentiments interfere with business." He knew how it was. "Mary—no, her rent was due last Thursday—how bad I felt about turning her out—she cried when she left." He felt bad too.

He breathed fresh air again—there the answer lay! 'Beauty of Nature'—he would find it. And finally he did find it. "Sorry, mister, no trespassing. We're going to start laying it out for the new incinerator which is to be built here." He was sorry, too.

They came to the man who had faith and they said, "Come—there is some one who needs you. He is the man who thinks much, and now he stands there, over the street, and he wonders 'Life or Death?' We will take you to him."

The man who thought much turned to him and said, "You see me now as I am—I can say no more."

The man of faith said, "You do not know—and so you are here. But I do not know—and that is why I am here. We must know. There was once a man who knew—but now he is no more. But there is a book—come, I have something to show you—we will read it together, you and I."

The man who thought much said, "I had forgotten," and he was led away.

* * * * *

Man, the Immortal

by SHIRLEY PLANK

MAN is a poor blind thing who cudgels his brains about the existence of an immortality that is apparent on all sides of him. Is there a heaven? he asks himself. Does the spirit pass to a future existence of joy or torment? Surely there must be life beyond this, or we are sadly cheated. Virtue is not rewarded and suffering not requited on this earth—then surely there is a God. He must have planned a future life where earthly scores are evened.

There is reason in this. If we have each but one short life, how manifest is the injustice of this world where one man prospers by another's death! But how if our first premise be at fault? By what right do we assume that each man lives but once, and passes from the earth forever?

If we reduce man to his component parts, what do we find? Physically he is a mass of living matter, that changes but cannot be destroyed. Each tiny atom has lived before, lives now, and will continue a part of life while the universe exists. Here is no mortality! Mentally, man is a group of thoughts—a series of impressions and philosophies which other men have held before him. No thought of ours is new—no impression but has existed before, and will exist again. We read the philosophy of the ancients and note with amazement that their thought is modern in its fundamentals. Surely, then, it cannot be mentally that we perish from the earth. And what of our spirits—that part of life which belongs to man alone, of all the animals? Spiritually, man is a group of emotions and instincts; of vague yearnings for good and evil. Not one of those yearnings but existed in primeval man, and will endure as long as man endures. Not one of those emotions and instincts is new, or can ever fade.

We do not need the aid of reason to prove our past existence. I am no more certain of my present life than that I have known life before. I know that my every thought and action is a part of me because it once was a part of someone else. I like the smell of fresh sawn wood because some ancient cabinet maker caressed his lumber with loving fingers. My love for horses is the passion of some long-forgotten youth whose heart leaped at the sight of satin skin and rippling muscle. The sky to me is God because some pagan worshipped it, and the rapture of a soul that went before me lives again

when melody enchants me. These feelings, and a thousand others are myself.. They are the very fibre of my being, and knowing that they have lived before, how can I say this is my first existence? Is the amoeba less alive when it divides in two? Would it exist the less if it existed in a thousand pieces? Because, in all their previous myriad lives, my component parts were not bound up in one 'being, I cannot say that they did not live before.

To each of us there come moments when we feel that we tread upon familiar ground. Somewhere, we lived this moment once before: the thoughts and emotions which are momentarily ours, were gathered together in one being previously, and for an instant we remember. Every breath we draw, every move we make, the very atmosphere we breathe is familiar. Almost—but not quite, for in a moment some thought, some feeling that was a part of us in that previous life, leaves us, and we are no longer the same identity with that far distant being.

Yet identity is unimportant. I am proud that I have not always been the creature I now am, but have lived and had my being in a myriad men, some worse, some better. I wish that I could know those men; that I could take them by the hand and call them friend: yet I do not need to share their lives to understand their hearts. Some old sea-dog bequeathed to me a nostalgic love of water and blue distance, and the passion of a long-forgotten artist seeks expression through my impotent soul. I know these men. They lived before, and live again in me, and as surely as I smother an instinctive emotion, refuse an incipient talent, stifle a native longing, I am denying to these, my friends and forbears, their right to immortality.

And even if I fail to grant this right, it makes no difference. Each talent, each longing, each emotion, I share with a thousand others, and somewhere, through life, each finds continuance. And if my lot in this life be but suffering and death; suppose I sin, and die with bloody hands unpunished, or pass, a martyred saint—it matters not. For no man, in a thousand, thousand lives, can fail to find his virtue's just reward; and never, passing through eternity, escape the consequence of wickedness.

* * * * *

Her Father's Daughter

by MERLE GEAKE

Hell, everybody," was my greeting, as I opened the door of my sorority house and banged my suitcase down.

"Leslye, where is Kay?" was the unexpected greeting.

"Kay, who?" I asked, for my thoughts were of home and train schedules.

"Kay Forrester," was the chorused reply.

It seemed strange on such a lovely day, that nearly all the inhabitants of the Sigma Phi house were in the lounge, and looked rather expectant. Why should they, "en masse", be interested in Kay Forrester? a rather odd, well-mannered, serious girl, who seemed perpetually worried over something.

"How should I know where she is?"

Helen, my room mate, took command and began firing questions at me.

Suddenly, it dawned on me; the serious, innocent look on the girls' faces was too good.

"Say, now look, won't somebody please tell me what is going on around here? Is it a joke?"

If it was a joke, it had back-fired. But maybe I was wrong. Even Myra who is noted for her giggling at the slightest resemblance of anything amusing, was silent. Helen, who usually was so cool and sophisticated, looked distressed.

She said very solemnly, "If Kay wasn't with you Leslye, then where is she?"

"Well, if you don't know and I don't, who does?"

"That's it, who does?"

"Please won't somebody explain?" I pleaded.

Helen acquiesced. "It is like this Leslye. Kay's father pho . . ."

"Did you know," one of the girls exclaimed, "that Kay's father is J. T. Forrester, the millionaire?"

We refused to believe her, that is until she produced a newspaper clipping. The man pictured in the clipping tallied exactly with Kay's father's picture, which hung in her room. The girls really began to buzz then.

Helen, Myra, and I slipped off to a corner of the room. Helen continued, "Kay's father phoned this morning. He was very upset when he learned she wasn't here. Apparently, he had received a disturbing letter from Kay and was trying to reach her, before she did anything rash."

Myra chimed in. "I saw her packing, but didn't think anything of it. She gave me the impression that she was going to spend the weekend with you, Leslye."

"No one knows where she has gone," added Helen. "Her parents thought she was here at Sigma Phi and we thought she was with you."

Now the questions so hurriedly put were understandable.

Myra giggled, looked coy and suggested, "Do you think she has eloped?"

"Oh NO!"

"But," I exclaimed, "with whom would she elope? Jim Henderson, the fellow she has been going with, he came back on the same train as I did."

"Are you sure Leslye, we've got to be certain," said Helen sinking down on the sofa beside me.

"Of course I am," I assured her.

We must have looked queer sitting about so thoughtfully. The other girls had drifted away, but there we were, the three with whom Kay had chummed—waiting for something to happen. We did not know much about her, except maybe her ideas were rather radical. She never seemed to want to talk about her home or parents, so we never asked. There we sat. Tall and dark Helen, looking very upset; blue eyed Myra, for once was silent; I, still with my hat and coat on; Mrs. James, the House Mother, adding her strength to the little group, sitting in the easy chair by the telephone.

Finally, it was Helen, who put into words what we were all thinking. "You don't think she was kidnapped do you? If her father is J. T. Forrester—"

It was a relief to have it said. Try as I might to force the idea out of my head, I could not. The silence that followed was broken by the thought-piercing ring of the telephone.

Mrs. James answered it. After a rather uniniforming conversation she set the receiver on the hook and said, "That was Mr. Forrester. He has called in the police, so you three had better stay around—the detective will want to see you girls especially."

The sorority house was in an uproar all night. Mrs. James had implied only one detective would put in his appearance, but four came. They were augmented by local and state police. True to form the newspapers, sensing a possible story, besieged the Sigma Phi household. Oh, what a night!

Kay had dropped from sight. We had hoped she would try to communicate with her family or with us—no luck. The waiting was nerve wracking—all that night, the next day, the next week, the next month: finally, no hope. The police checked every possible angle—marriage license bureau, train, bus and airplane connections. The Forresters appealed by radio and press for any clue which might lead to her discovery, to no avail. The conclusion arrived at by all concerned was, that Kay had planned this disappearance, so completely and cleverly were her tracks covered.

Time passed. There was the flurry of social events: hard work of final exams and the bustle of graduation. Soon Kay Forrester's story was a legend. And a legend so unusual! She had everything to live for; she was clever, had a mind of her own, possessed fine ideals, her parents had high social rank, were rich and influential.

* * * * *

It was a hot, humid July afternoon and we were stuck for several hours in a small town. (I forget the name.) The four of us, Helen and Jack, Bob and I, were on our way to Myra's houseparty, when the car stalled on the highway. No matter how hard we fiddled, checked and suggested, the car refused to go. One hour of waiting in the hot sun was rewarded by the appearance of the tow truck, which Bob had phoned for from a nearby farm house. Now, we were seated in the undefinably-odored atmosphere of the Star-Cafe eating a light lunch, in an attempt to fill the chasm of time which confronted us, until the car would be ready.

The food was good, but I didn't take notice of that. For some reason I found myself

thinking of Kay Forrester. Why, was an aggravating mystery.

We left the cafe and wandered down Main Street. As there was nothing else to do we decided to take in the only movie in town (even though we had seen it twice before). Three tickets only were bought, for the feeling of having seen Kay Forrester in this town would not leave me. Curiosity conquered.

With some misgivings, I returned to the Star Cafe for only there had I seen anyone that could possibly remind me of Kay. I was undecided whether to go in or not. Closely I scrutinized the two women customers just leaving the cafe, but they were fat and elderly. A waitress, leaning on a show case, next attracted my attentions. I went in, seated myself at the counter and ordered a coke.

This was silly, so absurd and yet—

The waitress—what was it? She was watching me, I could feel it. I dared not look up, but I was watching her hands. She made a nervous gesture, as if to twist an imaginary ring on her little finger. That was Kay's trick: to twist a signet ring worn on her little finger.

Could a millionaire's daughter be possibly working as a waitress? If she were, I had made the find of the century. Softly I said, "Hello Kay."

The girl dropped a glass that she had been wiping. It was Kay Forrester alright. She had dyed her hair and had combed it in a less becoming manner, there was almost no make-up on her face and she was dressed in a tan and green uniform, which had "Star Cafe" embroidered on the breast pocket.

"Hello Kay," I repeated.

Coldly the girl replied, "I'm afraid you are mistaken, my name is Jane, Jane Barker." And she began to move slowly toward the kitchen. I kept pace with her. I looked about. We were alone.

"Kay it is you! I know it is. Oh, you don't know how glad I am to find you. It was an awful shock your disappearing the way you did. Gosh, I ought to phone somebody."

"NO, Leslye! You are not going to phone anyone!" A Kay I had never seen before, spoke. "You are going to leave this town remembering only the quiet, the heat of the day. As for Kay Forrester, merely a girl you chummed with at Varsity, who disappeared and has not been found."

"But," I tried to remonstrate with her.

"Why, oh why do people meddle with human lives? I want to live, to laugh, to love, the way I want to. To be an ordinary human being. Not to be toadied and simpered at because my father happens to be J. T. Forrester!"

"Yes Kay, your parents, what about them?"

"They refused to listen. Dad is okay, but buried in his business and Mother is too interested in trying to be seen with the right people. She wanted me to live the life of a debutante and marry a pedigree. No thank you! I want to be independent, to learn, to earn as other people do."

"You are rich, Kay. You have social prestige. You, why, you have everything. Why do you want to take bread out of the mouths of those in desperate need?"

"In desperate need? Are they in any greater need than I? Man must have work to keep his self-respect and so must I. It is in my blood. My father started at fourteen, with nothing—no education to speak of, no influential friends and has built up one of the largest industries in the country. He dared to be different; he dared to be true to an idea; he dared to pioneer—as his father and his grandfather before him had done. Do you think, that in one generation of wealth all the pioneering spirit, the heritage which is mine, can be wiped out? Do you?"

I could not answer.

"To work with people, you've got to know people, you've got to understand their moods, their hopes, their sorrows. That is what I came to university for—to contact life's cross-section, but someone discovered my identity and spoiled things. I want to be accepted for what I am, not what my father represents, so I came here for a while.

But don't you think for a minute that desire to build, to create, to be independent is going to die with my father!"

"But Kay, we would under . . ."

She grasped my hand. "The boss. You had better go Leslye. You won't tell, will you?"

What should I do? I was overwhelmed by this show of emotion and determination, and I could not help agree, in part with her.

At the garage, I found the gang and the car waiting for me.

* * * * *

I Have No Song

[FIRST AWARD]

*I HAVE no song to sing in praise of death
I only know
That death will snuff out love and one by one
The little lamps of loving dim and go
And I alone—oh darkness, without you!
To come out of the empty room to breath
Of endless night and not to find you there . . .
I have no song to sing in praise of death.*

by KATHLEEN DAVIDSON

